MOBILE: FUTURE DUBAI OF THE GULF OF MEXICO?

Chapters 1-4 of How Mobile Can Reach Its Potential plus an analysis of the mayoralty of Mayor Arthur R. Outlaw (1985-1989)

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PREFACE OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

I am currently working on the full version of How Mobile Can Fulfill Its Unlimited Potential but Hurricane Sally and the devastation it has wrought on Greater Pensacola have affected my work schedule to the point that I have decided to release this preview excerptation of the full work tonight covering Chapters 1-4 from the book as is and the text from Chapter 5 specifically covering through the mayoral term of Mayor Arthur R. Outlaw (1985-1989)

I currently have in the manuscript progressed to discussing Mayor Mike Dow (1989-2005) but as it is not complete did not include it in this pre-version that I am releasing now.

When the full version is pulled this work will be pulled and then the full version be offered but due to finances I needed to release this now as every copy that sells my dates for Amazon royalties are usually the 29th of each month and so I have several days to get at least some sales in and my guess is someone reads this throughout I can get some and this at least shows my willingness to release a work in my own name.

I have included a Table of Contents and the page numbers will correspond to the page numbers in the paperback version as Kindle versions tend to have more pages of smaller margins.

Remember this is a first edition preview of what will be a much larger work but the last page in this volume is Page 60.

Chase Anderson “Andy” Romagnano
Pensacola, Florida
September 24, 2020

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FOREWORD: MY PURPOSE FOR WRITING THIS TREATISE

In late 2011 I began laying the groundwork through my website Andy's Cupboard for a campaign for Mobile City Council District 6 in 2013 and the long term plan at that time was to serve two terms on the City Council in Mobile City Council District 6 and then run for Mayor of Mobile in 2021.

Life intervened and I was subject to many injustices in the 2010's in Mobile but I maintain absent the fire of May 18, 2012 that my mother and dog Little Caesar did not survive and which it is only through remembering that the French doors were generally kept unlocked that I did I believe I would have won because my mother's best friend at the U.S. Attorney's Office was Brenda Cashdollar who was the wife of Dick Cashdollar who was the Public Safety Director for Mayor Mike Dow and a co-worker of theirs was Patsy Busby Dow who was First Lady of Mobile from 1989-2005, the wife of Mayor Mike Dow who was the longest serving directly elected Mayor of Mobile in city history.

The idea of "me running for Mayor" is becoming a thing due to financial blackmail attempts I am suffering on the part of some mean-spirited people in Mobile County designed to wreck my life when I sought to start a new life in Florida where we have in our state constitution the right to medical marijuana.

My position is if financial concerns force me to return to the city when I had left it and Alabama for good then I will run for Mayor of Mobile in 2021 though I would rather stay in Florida at this point where we also do not have a state income tax.

But if I do not run I still believe what Mobile needs now is a Mayor who will implement a "Romagnanoist Program" with "Romagnanoism" being the term I use to refer to the programs advocated by myself and so I want to lay out this plan for what the city needs to do in order to become the great international and world class city it was circa 1855 rather than being the "city of perpetual potential" it has been for decades.

So I am producing this treatise so that voters and other potential candidates who might take up the Romagnano Program can see where I am coming from.

Chase Anderson "Andy" Romagnano
Goulding, Florida.

CHAPTER 1: A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF MOBILE DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY SINCE 1702:

Mobile was founded in 1702 at the original site near modern day Axis, Alabama as "Fort St. Louis De Mobile" and credit is given to the Sieur De Bienville for such things though in this case he was simply a commanding officer and credit should rightly be given to all those who were among the original colonists with several of them being my ancestors including Charles Rochon and Jean Baptiste Baudreau De Graveline II who first arrived in Colonial Louisiana on January 8, 1700.

The Old Mobile site at Axis was known for flooding and the French had selected it because they wanted a port somewhat inland but that sat on a good river system as they had had enough experience at such latitudes to know that hurricanes could be an issue as nearby Pensacola, Florida was in fact the first attempt at a settlement by any European power in the current United States as it was settled first in 1559 but within 3 years a hurricane destroyed it and it was abandoned though the Spanish tried again at St. Augustine in 1565.

In 1706, my ancestor Charles Rochon, joined with LeBouef, Dardenne, and Parent and established a settlement at the mouth of the Mobile River into Mobile Bay, and this was once commemorated with a plaque on Royal Street at Fort Conde and in 1711, the official city was moved downriver to the current site and in 1715 Rochon would establish his plantation at the mouth of the Dog River into Mobile Bay occupying most of all of what is modern day Hollinger's Island and which remained in the hands of his descendants until his descendant Adam Hollinger Jr. went bankrupt in 1848 and so lost the island for good.

The French still wanted what they viewed as an "inland port" with a protected harbor and so Novuelle-Orleans was founded on May 7, 1718 and it is notable because it has grown to be a larger city and of greater importance than the city in France it was named for.

New Orleans soon became THE trade city of Gulf Coast Louisiana and the capital of the province and so ever major planter and trader in the province would keep a place in New Orleans to stay at when coming to town to trade while they otherwise lived elsewhere and there is a map from the early 1730's that shows that my ancestor Charles Rochon did indeed own a plot in New Orleans.

Mobile was relegated to a frontier outpost and a trade town for the families that had established the land claims early during colonization with the leading family in 1750's Mobile being the Rochons, my ancestors, who controlled pretty much all construction in the settlement and which continued doing so after the establishment of the rule of British Florida in 1763, much to the consternation of recently arrived British settlers.

Mobile was taken by the Spanish in 1780 by General Galvez who was permitted by my ancestor Charles Orbanne DeMouy to stay at the Dog River plantation prior to his seizure of the city.

The favored position of Rochons and now DeMouys continued in the city under Spanish rule and after the Americans took over an early "President" of Mobile in the 1810's, Inerarity, was related by marriage to the Rochons.

Alabama won statehood in 1819 and elected the first by district congressman in 1822, and that was George Washington Owen who was the husband of Sarah Louise Hollinger, a great-granddaughter

of Charles Rochon and other great-granddaughters of Rochon (and thereby second cousins of First Lady Owen) were Aimee Parent Roman, who was First Lady of Louisiana twice in the 1830's as her husband Andre Bienvenue Roman served as Governor of Louisiana from 1830-1834 and then again from 1838-1842. Another great-granddaughter was Marguerite DeMouy who married Anderson Clements in 1831. Margeurite was the daughter of Louis DeMouy and Irene Grelot. Anderson Clements was the nephew of H.W. Clements who established a sawmill on Dog River that was very prominent in the 1840's. Marguerite DeMouy Clements was the great-grandmother of my great-grandmother Beatrice Constance Clements Hope, known to Mobile by her stage name of Connie Bea Hope who had her own TV show on WKRG from 1955-1981.

As for Mobile itself, becoming American territory did open some limited settlement in the city but it was not as pronounced in the 1820's.

The real period of exponential growth for the city of Mobile was from the 1830s-1860 funneled by the cotton trade and Mobile was one of many Southern ports based on trade like New Orleans, Charleston, and Savannah. As such in the 1850's Mobile was an international world class global city that attracted a large number of immigrants especially from Ireland though it was also in the 1850's when the first Lebanese arrived in Mobile.

The War of Secession (1861-65) changed everything because in 1860 the majority of American capital was held in the South with 2/3's of the nation's millionaires (and $1 million in 1860 had the buying power of around $30 million in 2020) in the state of Louisiana and they disproportionately sugar planters.

After the war, the majority of American capital was held in New England and in the Anglo-Yankee elite establishment there and otherwise in the North who usually traced their ancestry "back to the Mayflower" with a classic archetype of them being the famed "Boston Brahmin."

Mobile was a scene of much political intrigue from when federal troops removed Mayor Slough from office at the point of the bayonet to the late 1870's when the city of Mobile declared bankruptcy and for over a decade was ruled under the "Port of Mobile" government.

The city was bypassed by "the New South" development that would build Birmingham and other industrial centers in the Upland South and stagnated for decades and became a "Free State of Mobile" within the state of Alabama permitting gambling and with a culture based on drinking more in line with its origins in French Louisiana and less in line with the rest of Alabama and this began to bring the city in conflict with the rest of Alabama.

In 1907, Mayor Patrick J. Lyons told the Alabama Legislature that "Mobile is prepared to secede from Alabama" if the Prohibition law under consideration was passed.

In the next two years Sheriff Francois "Frank" Cazalas was impeached from office and ostensibly it was because a lynching had occurred in Mobile County that he had "failed to prevent" but lynchings occurred in Alabama all the time and usually in rural Alabama a ringleader of a lynching would become Sheriff at the next election and Governor Comer had been one of the partisans in Barbour County in 1874. The real reason Cazalas was removed from office is because Cazalas was a

political ally of Mayor Lyons and Cazalas had been born French, was the perfect representation of why the rest of Alabama hated Mobile, and so Cazalas was a political trophy for Montgomery.

Mobile of course never enforced Prohibition and in the 1910's the city still had enough prestige that President Woodrow Wilson stayed at the Battle House Hotel in 1913 after inauguration.

World War I helped give a boost to what would become a prominent shipbuilding industry and a steady rate of growth of the city did begin from the inauguration of President Wilson onward.

The city adopted the City Commission form of government in 1911 and would continue having it until 1985 when it adopted the Weak Mayor-Strong Council form of a government as a result of the Zoghby Bill which was passed to bring the city into compliance with the Bolden decision of the U.S. Supreme Court of 1980.

The 1920's were an interesting time as political terrorists like Attorney General Harwell Davis, future U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black, and U.S. Attorney Aubrey Boyles sought to destroy the cultural traditions of the city of Mobile and it was also during this time that the city lost the status of having the state's official medical school because it was "too close to the red light district on St. Francis Street."

But there were heroes of the period, men like Alfred Staples, future Congressman Frank W. Boykin, Solictor Bart Chamberlain, Sheriff Willie Holcombe, Mobile Police Chief P..J. O'Shaughnessey, and Sheriff Paul Gillen Cazalas who proudly restored family honor even as the thuggish brutes in Montgomery forced him from office.

1930 was an important time because Willie Holcombe won back the office of Sheriff he had held from 1914-1922 and it is important because his father had been Sheriff and he would serve from 1930-1938 and again from 1938-1954 and his 28 years cumulative in the office makes him the longest serving Sheriff in the history of Mobile County.

From 1934-1938, Willie Holcombe's brother Robert was Sheriff of Mobile County. Robert's daughter Maude married Joseph Langan, who served as Finance Commissioner of the City of Mobile from 1953-1969 and known as "Mayor Langan" played a key role in the development of the city as it stands today.

There was no question in the 1930's who had "won" the 1920's, as all those prosecuted in the 1920's were elected to office in the 1930's and took back full control of the county including Frank Boykin who would represent the area in Congress from 1935-1963.

But an important cultural shift happened in the 1930's as part of the city's efforts to win a military base and so a crackdown on "vice" occurred in the late 1930's under U.S. Attorney Inge at the exact same time that the City of New Orleans began adopting a posture under Mayor Maestri (1936-1946) that the city's "tawdry" image was "good for tourism" and became more permissive of it and the city of Mobile did indeed land Brookley Air Base in the late 1930's but given the establishment of Keesler in Biloxi during World War II, when Biloxi "cleaned up" nothing and remained completely what it always had been run by French, Croatian, and over time, Italian, Catholics there was no reason

for Mobile to give a victory to the people who had thrown their lot in with Audrey Boyles and his cultural terrorists in the 1920's.

World War II brought much growth to Mobile and the area generally tripled its population in 24 months during the early 1940's and brought in an influx from the rural areas of Alabama and Mississippi but also is responsible for many of the problems in development in the city that persist today 80 years later and also added a new dimension to cultural conflict in the city as the new settlers generally had a "Bible Belt" outlook on life and also were far more rigid on issues of race to where there was a race riot at one of the shipyards in 1943. But enough stayed that the city lost all hope of the good ole days of the Free State of Mobile of the 1920's returning.

Ironically the cultural shifts of the early 1940's paved the way for Mobile to be one of the most progressive cities in the South on race in the 1950's because the old "Holcombe alliance" in government did not want the folks from the country gaining power and so African-Americans began being registered from 1947 onward and by 1953 were a third of the city electorate and were an integral part of the political base of Sheriff Robert Holcombe's son-in-law Joe Langan when he served on the City Commission.

One of the great mistakes historically occurred during this time because of prevailing urban theories of the time and an area of buildings dating back to the late 1700's known as Spanish Alley was destroyed as part of the efforts to build the Mobile Convention Center as well as the Texas Street Renewal area with another residential area dating back to before the 1860's destroyed north of Beauregard Street to build the Orange Grove projects and early Maisels in Mobile once lived in Orange Grove when it was a neighborhood of old houses.

However the most defining occurrence of this time was this annexation carried out in 1956 that tripled the size of city (in terms of already developed land and added more) and took a city that had an area of 25 square miles to one where today there are 117 square miles land and 40 square miles water and in the pre-1956 borders there were 125,000 residents recorded in 1950 and at the time in 1956 estimates were that city population increased to around 170,000 and then when the 1960 census came out a population of 202,000 was logged and this is important because look at what a map of Mobile from 1960 looks like and see all that had not been built at this time.

The Langan annexation of 1956 was important because when suburban flight did come to the city of Mobile it occurred to other areas within the city limit, granted developed on an awful street hierarchy plan in terms of the transportation grid but in the city limits and so suburbanization in terms of any number of incorporated metros forming along the borders of the city did not occur and when you look at the population of Mobile since the census of 1960 it has remained largely constant for 60 years with the difference being distributions and where everyone lived and that was the genius of the 1960 annexation.

In 2020, the only undeveloped land in the city of Mobile is generally east of Highway 43 in the Tensaw River delta and then the Dauphin Island Parkway peninsula is underdeveloped and contains a lot of raw land and the reason for the second is because after Hurricane Frederic destroy the bridge over the Industrial Canal in Theodore a decision was made in the fourth term of Governor George C. Wallace not to rebuild it, to make the bridge to Dauphin Island a two lane bridge, and to re-route the official state highway to Dauphin Island down Rangeline Road and then down Laurendine to pick up

Dauphin Island Parkway south of Laurendine while the part of Dauphin Island Parkway starting southbound from Government Street remained a state highway but was now diverted down Hamilton Boulevard reaching a terminus at Rangeline Road at what has proven over time to be one of the deadliest intersections in Mobile County.

Economically Brookley Field was a major part of the city's economy from the late 1930's to being slated for closure by the Johnson Administration in the BRAC in the 1960's and otherwise the city did after World War II develop some industry primarily in paper production and chemicals and Mobile does have a degree of importance to production within the American oil industry and there are active oil wells in Mobile County though it is generally believed the first oil strike in the state of Alabama was in Choctaw County.

The key dream of Mayor Langan was to form consolidated city-county government and ultimately it was obstructed because it was Langan proposing it and soon Langan found a critic in the Neighborhood Organized Workers (NOW) lead by Fred Richardson (now President of the Mobile City Council) and had the misfortune of the 1969 elections falling soon after Hurricane Camille roared through.

Mobile has since the time of the Port of Mobile government of Richard B. Owen concluded and elected government restored in the 1890's has tended to have one dominant figure in city politics and for two decades from the 1900s-1920s that figure was Mayor Patrick J. Lyons. The last decade of Lyons coincides with the period of prominence of Willie Holcombe and understand for essentially 40 years Sheriff Holcombe was the most important figure in Mobile County as a whole.

In 1953, Willie Holcombe's nephew-in-law was elected to the Mobile City Commission (Langan) along with two other new Commissioners in Henry R. Luscher who had once been a king of the Mobile Carnival Association (MCA) and Charlie Hackmeyer who was a classmate of Connie Bea Hope at the Russell School on Broad Street in the 1910s.

Joe Langan was the dominant force in Mobile city politics until his defeat in 1969 and from 1969 onward the big daddy in Mobile city politics was Public Works Commissioner Lambert Mims and you can tell often in the Commission period who the big figure was in an era by who monopolized the rotating title of "Mayor"

The Mims era came to an end mainly because he came under investigation/

Arthur Outlaw was the first directly elected Mayor since Patrick Lyons, elected under the Zoghby Bill in 1985.

Outlaw was the big man in city politics in the late 1980's and concurrently chairman of the Alabama Republican Party at the time but he drew his nightmare opponent in Vietnam War combat veteran Mike Dow, who had become a millionaire in his brother-in-law's tech company, his brother-in-law at the time the richest man in Mobile.

Dow won the election in 1989 by rolling up the vote west of I-65 while Outlaw dominated east of I-65 with the main issues being generational change and opposition to the convention center now bearing Outlaw's name that Dow came to support. Outlaw notably carried the African-American vote

in the city of Mobile (it was an even split though, Outlaw had more, but geographic split among whiites decided it for Dow) even as he was state Republican Party chairman, helped no doubt by the fact municipal elections in Alabama are non-partisan.

Mike Dow was the pre-eminent figure in Mobile city politics during his time as Mayor but it was during the 1990's that a city county split began to develop, which you often see turn up in Republican primary results when you look at returns by precinct in Mobile County.

I would argue that after Dow the real strongman in Mobile County was County Commissioner Mike Dean, who represented District 3 on the Commission and who had a good working relationship with Sam Jones while he was on the Commission with Dean and later generally had one with Merceria Ludgood (who succeeded Jones) as well and Jones was more a quiet administration (often lampooned as "Silent Sam" by Lagniappe agitator Rob Holbert) and so I think in that period you have to consider Mike Dean the real strongman behind the scenes within the Jones government and I think this is why Jerry Carl ran for County Commission District 3 in 2012 because the forces working to elect Sandy Stimpson Mayor wanted a loyalist in that seat and there is no question Carl was the one true Stimpsonsite on the Mobile County Commission from 2013-present.

Since 2013, there is no question Stimpson has been the strongman in Mobile city politics and his operatives have often garnered opposition by using roughshod tactics though I think Stimpson himself had big ambitions for the city along the lines of a Mike Dow, but ran into the "keep Mobile small" yokels and people who know nothing of urban planning and it goes without saying in his first term professional politicians consistently had his lunch and his one true ally on the Mobile City Council has been Joel Daves, himself the son of a Mayor of West Palm Beach from 1999=2003.

This matters because in terms of development strategy, Mobile was always a city of trade and commerce and never much of a manufacturing center with most heavy manufacturing not developed until WWII and beyond and it was generally the position during the Langan era and the Mims era that the city should try and attract a diversified economy but some companies would locate in Mobile and some would not.

Mike Dow sought to pivot the city to try and attract white collar and tech jobs and everything he did with the String of Pearls, downtown development, everything Mike Dow did is because he understood what was working in other cities and he wanted to position Mobile for the 21st century economy he saw coming.

The one key pivot from the Dow Administration to the Jones Administration is the Jones Administration gave up on recruiting density to Downtown Mobile and prioritized recruiting industry over all other forms of economic development which is why I believe those decisions as much as anything emanated from the ideas of Commissioner Dean.

Stimpson I think would like to follow the strategy Dow did but has so much of his time as Mayor consumed with political battles and so the current "consensus" of industry dominates.

I believe that consensus is bad for Mobile because ultimately the truly world class international cities of the 21st centuries are not going to be the cities that have economics based primarily on manufacturing and so I think a new pivot is needed.

A Romagnanoist Administration (and I will concede in the context of Mobile refashioning my philosophy for the city as “Rochonism”) will basically pursue an economy based on white collar jobs, tourism, finance, and tech and will seek to maximize the advantages that come from having a large university that is the most powerful public university in the state after the University of Alabama and Auburn University within the city.

This is why if finances force me to return to Mobile I will run for Mayor in 2021.

My grandfather (the son-in-law of Connie Bea Hope) became famous in Mobile as a police officer, having been born and raised in Brooklyn, New York but came South in the service and married my grandmother Lorraine Evelyn Walker.

Many believe he would have been Chief had he not become paralyzed.

He did rise to the rank of Lieutenant in the Mobile Police Department and headed up the Narcotics & Vice Division of the MPD in the late 1960’s and was a finalist for Mobilian Of The Year one year in the late 1960’s and I think it may have been in a year that State Senator Bob Edington won.

My grandfather retired from field duty in 1971 and retired from the department entirely in 1973, spending his last two years as the second-in-command at the Mobile Police Academy on Virginia Street.

There were many who wanted him to run for Sheriff of Mobile County in 1974 and Tom Purvis even told my grandfather that he (Purvis) would not run if my grandfather ran but my grandfather opted instead to run for House District 104 where he lost to Doug Johnstone in the effective election of the time (Johnstone later became a Circuit Judge in Mobile County and served on the Alabama Supreme Court from 1999-2005) and then after that loss became more active in the Paralyzed Veterans of America beginning at the conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 1974 and served two terms as the President of the organization beginning in 1978.

My grandfather told me that for a time they wanted him to run for the City Commission, which no doubt meant Public Safety Commissioner, and this means the title of “Mayor” would have rotated to him at some point but my grandfather would have been asked such a thing as a famous cop that people would have confidence in running the department but he would have always been there, even when he had the title of “Mayor” when it rotated to him, at he behest of whoever the key power was on the Mobile City Commission at the time.

My grandfather never did run for City Commission and in 1981 my grandmother took a job with the Corps of Engineers in West Germany and they lived in Germany from 1981-1986.

I will next include an appendix in the next section of the election results of 1974 because for whatever reason I do not find them in the Alabama Statistical Register of 1975 and then I will include also a table of who I deemed to have been the “First Among Equals” in Mobile city politics over the last 120 years or so at any given time.

END CHAPTER 1

APPENDIX 1: HOUSE 104 RESULTS FROM 1974 AND FIRST AMONG EQUALS TABLE

1974 Democratic runoff results in Alabama House District 104;
Douglas Johnstone 3,880
Joe Romagnano 2,889

FIRST AMONG EQUALS IN MOBILE SINCE 1900*
1. Patrick J. Lyons (1900's-1920's)
2. William H Holcombe Jr. (1918-1954)
3. Joe Langan (1953-1969)
4. Lambert Mims (1969-1985)
5. Arthur Outlaw (1985-1989)
6. Michael C. Dow (1989-2005)
7. Mike Dean (2005-2012)
8. Sandy Stimpson (2012-present)

* The concept for"First Among Equals" comes from the Ancient Roman title that was given to Roman Emperors during the Roman Principate when the legal fiction was maintained that it was still a Republic and that the emperor was "first among equals" and this is really the best way to show the most important figure in Mobile at any given time during the time covered.

The Latin name for the title was "Primer Inter Pares."

CHAPTER 2: IS THE TERRITORY WITHIN THE HANK AARON LOOP SUITABLE FOR THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT OF A 21ST CENTURY WORLD CLASS GLOBAL CITY?

The Hank Aaron Loop is the name generally given the the area of the city of Mobile bounded by Canal Street to the south, Broad Street to the west where it then curves into Beauregard Street which serves as the northern border and then the eastern border is Water Street.

The majority of the territory therein in in zip code 36602 and then a small portion on the north end is in 36603.

I was doing research and turned up that zip code 36602 was just under a square mile but then I looked at the map and saw that 36602 crosses the Mobile River and then takes a huge portion of an industrial island across the Mobile River and in fact makes up graphically the majority of the land area and when you piece that together with what is in the loop with 36603 you are left with an area of land that at most can be .4 square miles and a lot people do not know that a square mile generally represents 640 acres of land so half a square mile would be 320 acres of land.

When you look at a map of Mobile in 1860 we know the city had a population of about 30,000 in that census and we know it basically consisted of the modern Hank Aaron Loop, Oakleigh, generally down not that far down Broad Street, a little up St Stephens Road, and then one western boundary of the city at that time was said to be Lafayette Street as when St. Mary's Catholic Church was established on Lafayette Street supposedly that was the western city limit or at least I was told that growing up.

But keep in mind at most an area of 2 square miles had a population of 30,000 and this was before the era of high rise buildings when you had the main commercial thoroughfare of Dauphin Street which was the main commercial street of the city, and then you might have a business on a street corner elsewhere but otherwise generally residential away from Dauphin though during that time in many cities the pattern was storefront on the bottom, residence on the higher floors and Mobile does have a number of those buildings and most of the oldest commercial buildings on Dauphin Street within the Hank Aaron Loop were designed that way.

Within the Hank Aaron Loop today there are less than 2,000 residents but while it is often said that it is sad what Mobile has lost in terms of historic architecture as this area was treated as the central business district for years and there are things that were torn down within the area a fair amount survives and when you think of suitable lots for redevelopment in the Loop that will not make historic preservationists go bonkers in rage generally the few there are generally north of St. Anthony Street and north or south are generally commercial buildings or warehouses with parking lots built in the 20th century.

So if we estimate at most half a square mile in the loop or 320 acres remembering what an acre is I would say there is no more than 120 acres suitable for re-development in the Hank Aaron Loop and that may be under 100 acres in fact and so now I want to compare the areas of some other central business districts across America and the table will begin on the next page.

TABLE 2.1: AREAS OF SELECTED CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS ACROSS AMERICA

Downtown Atlanta: 4 sq mi/26,000 residents
Downtown Jacksonville: 2.75 sq mi/8,000 residents
Downtown Dallas: 1.4 sq mi/10,800 residents
Downtown Detroit: 1.4 sq mi/6,800 residents
Downtown Tampa:.81 sq mi/521 acres/6,800 residents
Downtown Kansas City (MO): 6.23 sq mi/22,600 residents
Downtown Indianapolis: 6.5 sq mi/29,000 residents
Downtown Pittsburgh: .64 sq mi/5,200 residents
Uptown Charlotte: 2.14 sq mi/30,000 residents
Greater Downtown Miami: 3.8 sq mi/66,000 residents
Chicago Loop: 1.58 sq mi/37,600 residents
Downtown Los Angeles: 5.84 sq mi/85,000 residents
Downtown West, Minneapolis: .76 sq mi/5,800 residents
Center City, Philadelphia: 7.7 sq mi/173,284 residents
Downtown Orlando: 3.65 sq mi/18,000 residents
Downtown Oklahoma City: 1.2 sq mi/7,500 residents
Downtown St. Louis: 1.1 sq mi/3,700 residents
Downtown St. Paul (MN): 1.01 sq mi/8,000 residents
Downtown Portland (OR): 1 sq mi/10,000 residents
Downtown Albequerque: .4 sq mi/1,250 residents
Central Business District, New Orleans: 1.06 sq mi/2,000 residents

I did not by all means use an exhaustive list but rather a sampling and that is because some of the square mileage numbers were harder to find than others though I was generally able to find the population figures on more central business districts than the square mile areas and so I will now include the population figures from some of these metros without the square mileages.

TABLE 2.2: POPULATIONS OF SELECTED CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AREAS

Downtown Louisville: 4,700
Downtown Cleveland: 13,900
Downtown Cincinnati: 4,850
Downtown Columbus/East Franklinton neighborhood (OH): 18,000
Downtown Baltimore: 37,000
University City, Philadelphia: 51,000
Centre City/Downtown San Diego: 28,000
Downtown Seattle: 82,000
Cecil B. Moore, Philadelphia: 37,000
Buckhead, Atlanta: 82,000

It is again not an exhaustive list and some will note that I did not for example include any districts from New York City but the thing about that is in terms of what is meant as a "central business district" or "downtown" in most American cities pretty much all of Manhattan Island/New York County would qualify and that is 14 square miles and around a million and a half residents and then there are what would be considered outright "downtowns" in Brooklyn and Queens but to the extant that in many cities, the "downtown" area consists of buildings next to each other, no space, etc, the better part of Brooklyn would also constitute a "central business district" and so New York City is its own unique case and I did include some Philadelphia neighborhoods but New York City is a special case along with San Francisco, Philadelphia, and a few others that has always had such a high degree of urbanization and row houses and all (Chicago traditionally had less row houses. Houses would be close together but would be separated by some air and not all within a single structure like a traditional Baltimore or Philadelphia row house.

Philadelphia is actually a model for cities to follow and has done a lot better than many other older cities for any number of reasons and circa 2018 I had wanted to move to Philadelphia to start anw but could never get up there.

The point in this exercise was an analysis of what "downtowns" or central business districts are and then compare them to the Hank Aaron Loop to demonstrate that the Hank Aaron Loop simply cannot be the "anchor central business district area" for the Mobile Bay area and it is a function of geography and what is there relative to community sentiment because Mobile is a city that in the historic neighborhoods sidewalks get ripped up because you cannot cut down a tree and when Mayor Sandy Stimpson had a tree cut down for a low-rise hotel in the Hank Aaron Loop all hell broke loose and if you remember my criticism of the time was that "it was done for a low rise hotel" because that tree the lot it was on, it was not the most special tree, but I felt the hotel built didn't justify it but a correctly built 40 story hotel that would have boosted tourism would have in that site.

The New Plan for Old Mobile passed under Mayor Mike Dow (1989-2005) generally focused pretty much on the entire pre-World War II historic core and it called for a high rise corridor on the northern reaches of the Hank Aaron Loop and the reason why it is so geographically limited is because there it is only a lot of warehouses and mid-20th century commercial low rise buildings with parking lots that community sentiment will permit you to tear down whereas more than half of the structures within the Hank Aaron Loop you simply cannot touch and that it even developed as the "central business district" of Mobile as much as anything was because Mobile was largely economically stagnant from 1865-1915 and whereas in New Orleans you had multiple corridors open up, you had none of that in Mobile, and then growth started coming in a sustained manner precisely as people began getting cars and so would all drive to work or take the street car and Mobile was just not large enough at that time for other major commercial districts to arise and in Antebellum Mobile the city had always organized around one main commercial street in Dauphin Street and so it was baked into the culture of the city.

My contention is that the Hank Aaron Loop territory is too small to support the kind of central business district Mobile needs and I support refashioning it as an Arts and Entertainment district and to the extent that high rise development occurs if we can get an office tower there that will be wonderful but almost any high rise built on the territory within the Hank Aaron Loop will have to be mixed use and given the number of office space vacancies we see in the territory enclosed by the Hank Aaron Loop now the most logical development there will be high rise hotels, high rise residential, some retail,

and given the observations made by Dr. Richard Florida in his book The New Urban Crisis I think it is possible to recruit a number of tech firms to the territory within the Hank Aaron Loop as Florida noted that in the 2010's the main area of growth of new startups in the San Francisco Bay area was not in Silicon Valley and Santa Clara County but rather in the City and County of San Francisco itself and not in the high rise areas but rather in the city's neighborhoods where you have block after block of low mid-rise commercial buildings and the historic homes San Francisco is famous for and when you consider that most of the territory of the New Plan for Old Mobile area where the buildings still stand that were there in 1930 is a very close Mobile version to a match for the kind of neighborhoods in San Francisco where all that growth occurred in the high tech and start up sectors in the 2010's.

And it has to be remembered "tech" can refer to multiple things as it can refer to actual components of technology equipment, and this is in fact how "Silicon Valley" got its name, but it can also refer to the computer code and other things that you basically need a computer and an office to do and many tech firms of the 21st century have been in the latter category and I believe with the right policies Mobile can become VERY ATTRACTIVE for such development.

But the Hank Aaron Loop actually has about 40-50% of extant architecture dating to before 1900 and then is surrounded by neighborhoods in Old Dauphin Way, Oakleigh, Campground that are more of the same and Mobile community sentiment simply will not let you tear down much built before 1940 built in certain styles.

This means generally zip codes 36602, 36603, 36605 north of Gosson/Duval Street, 36604, 36606, and 36607 are completely unsuitable to develop as a central business district area and so if you do not develop those but do not open up another central business district in the city then Mobile is going to stagnate for all time and to use San Francisco as a comparison because in so much of the city you can not tear down there is a small high rise area but the fact that San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose now generally functions as one megalopolis region you now see the high rise impulse instead transferring to Alameda County and Santa Clara County and notably Downtown San Jose's economy is disproportionately anchored by technology firms in buildings that Emporis would define as high-rise (12 stories or higher) and the high rises built in the City and County of San Francisco today are in certain neighborhoods and are more likely than not to be residential than big office towers as San Francisco has become in effect now a bedroom community where the highest earners in Alameda, Santa Clara, and other surrounding counties commute home to every day.

When you think of what Dauphin Street is in terms of an almost endless stream of commercial buildings east of Broad to Water Street in terms of the architecture except for being smaller scale it is most similar to any city to that of Magazine Street in New Orleans and in New Orleans of the area you had several spurs like Magazine Street in the city and Canal Street generally divided the Anglophone south side from the Francophone south side and even now in New Orleans whether streets are divided north or south is determined by Canal Street and Dauphin Street generally performs this function in Mobile County and once you are west of McGregor Avenue if you continue drawing a latitude line from Dauphin Street across the rest of Mobile County out to the Mississippi line that is the north-south demarcation line for addresses in Mobile County.

There were some similar style commercial buildings on Government Street and there may have been more in the past but many have been lost with time and you will see some of the traditional "Downtown Mobile that look like French Quarter" buildings on some of the north-south spurs nearer to

Water Street like Royal and there is one of Jackson but the pattern in Mobile was the grand retail street, and this was seen in all cities in the 1800's as even New York City had certain districts and there is a "Jewelry District" in Downtown Providence that has always been where jewelers concentrate traditionally and of course most cities in America once upon a time had outright designated "red light districts" with the official red light district of Mobile in the early 20th century being around where the state medical college in Mobile which is why Mobile lost the right to have the "official state medical college of Alabama" to Birmingham a century ago.

But in downtown the historic commercial buildings are only in a few small areas and most of it you had little corner businesses and then residential structures and so again it is territory that essentially in most American cities in the Sunbelt that have not had historic preservationist movements to the degree that Mobile has you take say Florida Street as a rough western boundary, and I-10 as a rough southern boundary, St. Stephens Road to the north, and then the Mobile River to the east and it would be within that box that all the old houses and such get torn down for new structures to get built and this has been very common in the Sun Belt metros which do not have strong historic preservation movements and this is also generally how the central business district of Downtown Los Angeles developed but not so much in cities like Mobile, New Orleans, Charleston, Savannah, Galveston, and so forth.

The only development you could have in the historic core of Mobile on lots that weren't already ruined would be of the edge city model seen in the Buckhead section of Atlanta for example and back in 2012 I didn't know the term at the time was "edge city" but basically the idea I had for bringing density to the post-1956 annexation areas was going to be to try and have clusters of density along the main thoroughfares particularly where we have low rise shopping centers that have the classic set up of the flattop parking lot and then the one store building in a shopping plaza and in March 2012 my vision for bringing density downtown was in the lots you can in the Hank Aaron Loop, and through redevelopment of the old Texas Street Development Area, and then also knocking down the housing project at Orange Grove in order to try and spread density north but when you consider this approach in the context of urban planning as the science is generally seen in 2020 you could certainly get some high rises in and all but there would still be the issue of the street hierarchy set up of the road grid in almost all the post-1956 areas as a ticking time bomb albatross destined to strangle the life out of the city and while it would bring some density to the city Mobile would still ultimately under perform in that department relative to cities like Atlanta, Charlotte, Houston, Jacksonville, and increasingly Nashville.

This is why I believe it is vital to open up a new primary central business district, a "new downtown" if you will, in the post-1956 additions to the city where you can start anew and create a truly world class district that will be a player in international commerce the way that Dauphin, Water, and Commerce Streets were circa 1855.

I will lay out my vision for the current territory within the bounds of the Hank Aaron Loop that are generally referred to in Mobile parlance as "downtown" in a later section but now I want to describe my vision for what I believe can become one of the great central business districts and indeed dense urban districts period not just of the South, or the United States, or even North America or the Western Hemisphere but indeed the entire world and I will lay out that vision in the next section.

END CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 3: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GRID PATTERN IN MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR MOBILE'S FUTURE AND SOME FIRST THOUGHTS ON THE PRICHARD SITUATION

The traditional form of urban planning as practiced by the Ancient Romans is the grid pattern and generally most American "downtown" central business districts are organized on some form of the grid pattern and in the case of the Ancient Romans the irony is that Rome itself was a city with meandering byways and allies and that to a large extent grew up on what might have been an ancient version of the street hierarchy but in every city that they themselves built they laid out the perfect grid and all new Roman cities would have certain amenities in them therein and so you could go to any Roman city and you would have the certain amenities like a theater and then an arena where after the Coliseum was built all of them ended up being mini-versions trying to replicate that and you would have your baths and your public latrines.

The Ancient Greeks gave us much that is part of our cultural heritage and they did bequeath democracy to the world but without question urban life as we know it today is a bequeath to our modern world from Ancient Rome and a number of modern European, North African, Middle Eastern and Asia Minor cities today were founded in Roman times and so the fact that American cities that were founded in colonial times whether British, French, Spanish, etc all had their start with the grid pattern is a direct bequeath to our country from Ancient Rome.

The British had as their model London which was first founded in Roman times as Londinium (and so even the name of "London" ultimately is a hand down from Ancient Rome indirectly but also Paris and the great cities of Spain and many of the great cities of early Islamic civilization were also built with strong grid patterns because of course the civilization that the early Islamic empires copied most carefully was the Byzantines and the Byzantines were legally the continuation of the Roman state as the Eastern Roman Empire and the Roman state itself founded in 753 BC did not formally cease to exist until 1453 AD with the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans.

So that Mobile was even laid out by the French twice in a grid pattern is a direct cultural hand me down from the Ancient Romans and a number of streets within the boundaries of the Hank Aaron Loop have the same name and one thing I would do if I was Mayor of Pensacola is that Garden Street in Pensacola was laid out by the Spaniards as La Calle Jardin and was called that because it was a street with garden plots on it and I would say Pensacola should start using the Spanish name again as this is the kind of thing that will appeal greatly to the market that Quint Studer is trying to recruit to the city.

One street name that did not carry over to modern times was Orbanne Street and it was recorded by the historian Peter Hamilton in the book Colonial Mobile that he wrote in the late 1890's and I recite this from memory so I cannot remember the exact page but that a section of St. Michael Street was named "Orbanne Street" because my ancestor Charles Orbanne DeMouy had his home at the corner of what is now St. Michael and Royal Streets.

In Mobile you generally see the grid pattern within the city limits if you draw a line generally the western boundary of this is going to be Sage Avenue and it persists a bit more in Crichton, which itself was generally developed as a community outside of the then Mobile city limits prior to 1900, and you see in the areas of the Village of Spring Hill near Old Shell and McGregor specifically in the area

bounded to the west by McGregor Avenue, to the north by Spring Hill Avenue, to the east by I-65, and to the south by Old Shell Road and then you see it also carry south of Old Shell Road but you do not see this of course in the area out by the Country Club of Mobile which consists of any number of winding roads but is not a pure street hierarchy pattern as these were developed in the early days of the use of the automobile where cars were often times open top and people enjoyed the drives though part of it was the hills in the terrain and all but you go out to Bit and Spur Road and in 1930 that was of course essentially a country road not unlike Snow Road in western Mobile County would have seem circa 1990.

But again the grid pattern is generally seen in Midtown, Crichton, it is seen sort of in Toulminville in that parts of it are on a modified grid pattern but there were some subdivisions developed out in Toulminville in the 1950's in accordance with the kind of subdivision development patterns then prevalent in Mobile at the time.

It is seen of course in Campground and in the Orange Grove projects, and in Maysville generally down to Duval Street and is in existence in a bit of a muted form out in Mertz and the air out around Fairway Drive. It is also seen in Trinity Gardens and in East Prichard and before I continue I want to discuss East Prichard a bit and specifically Prichard east of I-65 and this is both classic Prichard that formed around Wilson Avenue and was incorporated around 1925 as well as the area around Bullshead which in older maps was often referred to as Neely.

In 1960, the city of Prichard is said to have maxed out at around 47,000 residents and that population had a much more compact distribution at that point in time than it has today but the grid pattern areas of Prichard are most of the city east of I-65 and then Whistler and most of zip code 36612 and it is not really until you get into Eight Mile and cross over into zip code 36613 and traditionally the majority of the population of Prichard lived in a compact area while the majority of land was really on the other side of the intersection of St. Stephens and Lott back out towards Highway 158 and Prichard actually as a wealth of undeveloped land that simply is not developed because it remains under the government of the incorporated city of Prichard and people just do not want to develop under that government because Prichard is seen as mismanaged among other things.

My honest thought is the last Mayor who had any handle at all on it was AJ Cooper in the 1970's but tax base flight and the crack cocaine epidemic hit Prichard hard and things were not helped by a media in Mobile that sensationalized every single thing that went wrong in Prichard and there are cities that were similar to Prichard within their metro areas that have had similar sad histories like Compton, California and it is a whole host of factors of tax base flight, racial prejudice, but even then there simply has been mismanagement by multiple administrations in Prichard and after the bankruptcy I mean everyone is just nihilistic about it to some extent and I understand the position of AJ Cooper in defending the city he once governed as he accomplished a remarkable achievement but he as much as anyone understands urban planning and it is unfortunate but the city is beset by so many problems when actually the land itself is not in a bad location and I do think they would do better under a government where people would have confidence in spending money to develop under and as much as Cooper defends Prichard I think if you put him under truth serum he would concede this point to me.

I will say that the Prichard Mall was actually a good idea from the Cooper Administration at the time. It was not the Prichard Mall that is responsible for the problems of Prichard because they would have happened with or without it and it was a concept that was in vogue in urban planning at the time

that Mayor Cooper passed it and in a number of cities it did work well and is still working well and so whenever people blame AJ Cooper for this or that in terms of his administration of Prichard if you read between the lines often times there is a racial motivation there and I am not saying that Cooper was the greatest Mayor in history.

Algernon Cooper had his successes and he had his failures as Mayor of Prichard and there were things I would have done as Mayor, things I would not have done. One thing I would have done is the order he issued to try and stop looting in the wake of Hurricane Frederic in 1979. If anything the issue with Cooper and Prichard is Cooper left Prichard to take a job under HUD Secretary Moon Landrieu and his successors were not up to the job and it speaks volumes for the people of Prichard that they were willing to put race aside and elect who they elected as Mayor in 1988 but Prichard had started around street car suburbs focused on Wilson Avenue and then another corridor on Turner Road and then eventually it took in Whistler and surrounding areas but Cooper also had the misfortune to govern in an economically tough time and remember he governed at a time when one member of the Prichard City Council ended up shooting somebody (I think a business partner) and I may have an indirect connection to that because I am under the impression one of them in that episode was connected to Dixie Supply.

Dixie Supply was founded by my maternal grandfather John Henry White (1905-1970) and when my mother was born in 1952 they lived on Davis Avenue in the vicinity of Catherine Street but they moved in the 1950's out to a house on St. Stephen's Road just north of Lott and across the street from Fagerstrom Park and Burger Master and my grandfather built the Dixie Supply out there and so he would walk across the street to work and he had another store on Highway 45 up where Oak Grove Road comes in and that store for a while was Cheapo's convenience store and if you have ever been up there you notice a little white shack on the property and that is where my grandfather would often sleep at nights guarding the store with a gun.

My connection to Prichard besides my mother having grown up there is I was baptized at St. Bridget's Catholic Church in 1986 within a month of the 100th anniversary of the baptism of legendary railroad man Casey Jones at the same church in 1886 and I was born on May 7, 1985 but wasn't baptized for a year after birth because my paternal grandparents were living in West Germany at the time.

I mentioned Prichard in relation to Mobile because most of east Prichard and Whistler are on the classic grid pattern and Whistler of course had its start as a railroad village and has many structures extent to the 1880's and earlier and there is actually a sort of "Whistler style" to many of the historic structures in Whistler that is a bit different and unique when compared to similar period buildings in Mobile and in this case of the 47,000 recorded in the city of Prichard in the 1960 census it is safe to say that my guess is around 33,000-36,000 lived on the grid pattern and I do believe Prichard probably maxed out at population over 50,000 in the early 1960's but of course they were not recording that at the time.

But if you look at Mobile in 1960 and then Prichard and you remember that the population of Mobile in 1950 was 120,000 and what is there my conservative guess is 105,000 on the grid pattern in the Mobile city limits at that time and then the around 35,000 in Prichard or so meant that 140,000 residents in Mobile County were living on the grid pattern or in the high 30s-low 40s within the county

itself and I believe the Prichard grid pattern in particular excluding Whistler had around 30,000 residents at the time and all in single family homes and so within the East Prichard grid under a government that people feel comfortable investing under to develop that area has a lot of potential for redevelopment and I will discuss my views on Prichard Redevelopment later on.

But the thing to remember about Mobile County in 1960 is if you have 140,000 on the grid pattern remember in 1960 the census population of the whole county was in the range of 320,000-340,000 and it must be remembered that Chickasaw also peaked in population in 1960 at around 10,000 and so between Mobile, Prichard, and Chickasaw you had 260,000 residents and so over two thirds of county population lived in the city limits of the three principal municipalities in Mobile County of the time and remember Mobile Terrace was outright developed out the grid pattern and when Cody Road was the city limit Mobile Terrace was literally to the west while Hillsdale subdivision was developed as a subdivision of street hierarchy oriented curvv road sprawl to the east of Cody Road and most of that was in the city limits even when first developed.

A consequence of the development pattern of Mobile is generally east of Cody, south of Bear Fork, west of I-65, and north of Halls Mill Creek you really don have formal city district names the way most cities do even in their newer areas.

You have a bunch of “subdivisions” which is simply a descriptor for how plats will first be planned as a develop when you lay them out with Probate Court but in Mobile in this area people have tended to always identify with the subdivision name and then you don’t really have district names on the business corridors of the main thoroughfares and for a city where the city proper population has sat at 200,000 for 60 years this is a bit extraordinary in terms of how American primary cities have historically always developed especially when you have multiple “district” names within the territory of the Hank Aaron Loop which I have already established earlier in this treatise is rather geographically compact.

The Mobile Area Association of Realtors has been faced with the fact that the definition of “West Mobile” has evolved over time because in 1960 it would have referred to everything west of Sage, north of Halls Mill Creek, and south of Bear Fork and then over time through the machinations of city politics eventually the eastern boundary of “West Mobile” in popular parlance retreated back to Interstate 65.

But when MAAR decided in the 2000’s was figuring out names to assign to neighborhoods, and these would also be printed for real estate listings in the Mobile Press-Register back when Mobile actually had a daily paper in the area between Cody and 65 the name Cottage Hill was given to the territory north of Halls Mill Creek, east of Cody Road, south of Airport Boulevard, and west of I-65. It is when you got north of Airport that things got interesting because “Spring Hill” was pretty easy to delineate out but for the rest you have a broad descriptor of “University/Municipal Park” and the reason is because this was once seen as “West Mobile” but by the mid-2000’s when buyers looked for the “West Mobile” lifestyle as it had been circa 1957, generally none of those buyers were interested in anything east of Cody Road at that point.

The one neighborhood really in the area of the city between Cody and 65 that has a true grid pattern is the Pinehurst subdivision that has entry routes off of Airport Boulevard and Hillcrest Road and per MAAR classification you would consider it on the northern reaches of “Cottage Hill” but the

neighborhood was developed on a grid pattern but because my mother had a post office box at the 36685 post office at the Plaza De Malaga most of her life, back during the time when Kenny Roger's Roasters had a restaurant in the plaza, that the roads going back into Pinehurst were dirt roads and so you had all these new houses built on dirt roads in what had been city limits for several decades with the dirt road coming off of Airport Boulevard was a 6 lane thoroughfare and so in some respects it truly was extraordinary.

There are some duplexes in Pinehurst and the neighborhood has begun to show its age but because Pinehurst is already on a grid pattern the key there is getting proper sidewalks in every part of the neighborhood and then trying to get at least some mixed use properties there, maybe a corner store or a gallery, but Pinehurst is much easier to configure along the lines of New Urbanism and Smart Growth than is most of the city north of Halls Mill, east of Cody, west of 65, and south of Bear Fork.

I have engaged in this discussion of the grid pattern here because my proposal for a "New Downtown for Mobile" is based on the fact that in most of the areas that are currently on the grid pattern in Mobile historic preservationists will not let you build up and given in the Mobile city limits themselves I believe at maximum potential you can have well over 100,000 residents in these territories I am not inclined to really disturb any of the historic fabric of the historic core at all because I went to day care as an young child and then in the summers in the early 1990's at the Greek Orthodox Church on Ann Street and my mother worked at the U.S. Attorney's Office and so generally when it is a historic commercial or residential building within the Hank Aaron Loop and not a modern warehouse or gas station looking strike structure my preference is everything I saw in 1995 in the Hank Aaron Loop boundaries, unless it is destroyed to where you cannot salvage the old structure and have to build anew on a new lot I would prefer to have everything remain where it is.

And that means Mobile has no choice but to establish a new primary central business district, "A New Downtown for a Better Mobile."

END CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 4: DUBAI OF THE GULF OF MEXICO: A NEW DOWNTOWN FOR A WORLD CLASS MOBILE

As I have explained earlier the relative small territory of land within the Hank Aaron Loop and the community sentiment towards historic preservation of the historic core of the city means that 36602, 36603, 36604, 36605 north of Gosson/Duval, 36606 and 36607 are unsuitable generally for the kind of redevelopment needed for a modern and competitive core city in a 21st century metropolitan area that wishes to be a major competitor in the international economy the way that Mobile was in the 1850's.

Now for example if you go into an area that is generally 36606 and 36607 and I am thinking of the box between Dauphin Street, Sage Avenue, Spring Hill Avenue, and I-65 there are modern subdivisions dating back to the 1940's and 1950's that generally have not remained premiere throughout time that community sentiment will allow you to redevelop for higher density but on streets like Item Avenue given the housing stock there and the historic architecture you will have a fight tearing down any structure once it is older than a certain point and for my part I actually support designating Crichton as a historic district because the commercial buildings there on Spring Hill Avenue generally west of Bay Shore there are several that in style date back 100 years and remind me a bit of some of the buildings on Cervantes Street in Brownsville in the Pensacola area but I actually think designated as a historic district and proper attention shown thereto Crichton can become an in demand neighborhood in the city of Mobile,.

But the key issue here is the need for a new primary central business district for Mobile and I will note a city need not have just one central business district because Tampa is the county seat of Hillsborough County, Florida and has a population of over a million people with around 350,000 in the city limits of Tampa itself and of course the Greater Tampa Bay Metro area also is composed of Pinellas County on the other side of Tampa Bay which has St. Petersburg as a county seat and so generally an overall metro area of over 2 million people and Tampa of course became the largest city in Florida in the early 20th century and was like New Orleans of the 19th century in that it was largely a city of immigrants, in the case of Tampa generally Italian and Cuban, but Tampa has its own unique style and while not as strong as Mobile, New Orleans, or Charleston there is a historic preservationist bent in many parts of Tampa where certain things you just "cannot tear down."

As I noted in Chapter 2 the city of Tampa has as its formal "Downtown" or primary central business district an area that is around .81 square miles or 521 acres and generally by my estimates a little more than double the territory contained within the Hank Aaron Loop and there are 8,000 people living in it but many of the older neighborhoods on the grid pattern adjoining it that in an Atlanta, Charlotte, or Houston would have been torn down and redeveloped long ago local historic preservationist sentiment simply will not permit you to do so in Tampa.

In the city of Tampa there is a secondary "central business district" which if they didn't already use the name "downtown" for the original central business district you could rightly call a "downtown" within its own right and it is the Westshore district and it is centered on Westshore Boulevard and within the district there is 11,000,000 square feet of commercial office space, there are over 4,000 businesses within the district, two malls, more than 200 restaurants and bars, it has several major corporate headquarters, and Tampa International Airport is located within the district as well and over

100,000 people work in the Westshore district and while I could not find an “area” listing through initial research it is likely such research will show that the Westshore Business District covers a larger area of geographic territory.

The Tampa-St. Peterburg metro area as a whole has central business districts of high rise nature in Downtown Tampa and Westshore in Hillsborough County and in Downtown St. Petersburg in Pinellas County and Pinellas County itself has a number of very popular beaches like Clearwater Beach that border the western coast of Florida on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Mexico and while Tampa is subject to hurricanes just as the rest of Florida is it in terms of climatology is less likely to see a strike any given year than say the southeastern counties in Florida of Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe or the counties in the Panhandle from Escambia County to past Franklin County because of how storms tend to track in the Atlantic Basin though Tampa is in an area that has to worry about November hurricanes given examples like Hurricane Gordon that will track east out of the Gulf of Mexico and then cross the Florida Peninsula and re-enter water in the Atlantic Ocean.

I use Tampa-St. Petersburg as an example because it as an area is starting to emerge into a megalopolis style area with counties to the north like Pasco County and to the south down towards Port Charlotte as well as to the east into Polk County and so in terms of the Mobile Bay area represents one example for how I would like to see our area develop as a megalopolis especially given that the way Tampa Bay splits Pinellas County and Hillsborough County is not unlike how Mobile Bay splits Mobile and Baldwin Counties and has a few bridge crossings but it is otherwise development down the counties and so I think provides one example for the Mobile Bay area to follow for future development and it bears to be said that the San Francisco Bay area is the same way because while San Francisco Bay you travel in southward from where the mouth is in the Pacific Ocean you have development on either shore of San Francisco Bay with a few bridge crossings either way but the development pattern is one factor that supports multiple high density “downtown” style central business districts such as the one in Downtown San Francisco where the Transamerica Pyramid is and the one in Oakland and the one in San Jose and so forth.

For Mobile to have a globally competitive “downtown” central business district that is a center of global commerce and that restores Mobile to the world class status the city had in the 1850’s a new central business district needs to be opened up and I believe the best location for such an area, a “Downtown West” if you will, is in an area that is actually near the geographic center of the developed territory of the Mobile city limits and within a 5 minute drive of the terminus of Interstate 65 into Interstate 10. This will actually be a contiguous area but because of the “dividing lines” Mobilians often use in their own minds I will lay out the different areas of the “New Downtown” in the table below:

TABLE 4.1: AREAS OF THE NEW “DOWNTOWN WEST” CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT OF MOBILE

Area A: Bordered on the west by University Boulevard, to the north by Airport Boulevard, to the south by Cottage Hill Road, to the east by Interstate 65

Area B: Bordered to the west by Interstate 65, to the south and east by Bel Air Boulevard, to the north by Airport Boulevard

Area C: Bordered to the west by Interstate 65, to the east by Springdale Boulevard, to the north by Dauphin St

Area D: Bordered to the west by Interstate 65, to the south by Dauphin Street, to the east by Sage Avenue, to the north by Old Shell Road

Area E: Bordered to the west by Bel Air Boulevard, to the north by Airport Boulevard, so the south by Cottage Hill Road, to the east by Sage Avenue

In addition to this in keeping with the "edge city" concept that in the 21st century has seen the greatest growth in metropolitan conglomerations worldwide, an example being Buckhead in Atlanta and much of the growth in the city of Houston itself falls into the "edge city" rubric as do most of the high rise corridors in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area outside of the downtown central business district of the city of Atlanta itself, a prime example being Sandy Springs, there are areas that are primarily the suburban style of "shopping center with a parking lot" model that I would like to see redeveloped in edge city fashion for higher density in the city limits of Mobile and because I have already used a lettered naming center to delineate "areas" to help readers get a conception of my idea for a new primary central business district for the City of Mobile I will continue progressing from the "areas" I so delineated in Table 4.1 beginning with letter "f."

TABLE 4.2: "EDGE CITY" INSPIRED NEW HIGHER DENSITY ENCOURAGED AREAS FOR THE CITY OF MOBILE

Area F: Bordered to the west by Berwyn Drive, to the south by Airport Boulevard, by Yester Oaks and Llanfair subdivisions (disturbing neither and preserving both), to the east by Interstate 65, to the north by Dauphin Street

Area G: The Hillcrest Road commercial corridor between Grelot Road and Airport Boulevard

Area H: The commercial district of Dauphin Island Parkway between Club House Road and McVay Drive/Englewood Street

Area I: Moffett Road from Howells Ferry Road to Spring Hill Avenue

Area J: University Boulevard between Ziegler Boulevard and Bear Fork Road

Area K: Schillinger Road between Cottage Hill Road and Zeigler Boulevard

Area L: Airport Boulevard commercial districts between Hillcrest Road and Schillinger Road

Area M: Shopping centers on St. Stephens Road between Prichard Avenue and Ann Street

Area N: The shopping centers on Dauphin Island Parkway between McVay Drive/Englewood Street and Gosson/Duval

Area O: Hurtel Street and Michigan Avenue south of Virginia Street to Interstate 10

Area P: Shopping centers on Martin Luther King (old Davis Avenue/Stone Street) that are not historic between Beauregard Street and Craft Highway

Area Q: Tillman's Corner annexed into the Mobile city limits in 2008

This is only a sampling of areas of the city that I believe need to see an increase of density in development modeled on the edge city concept that has seen the most development in cities across the word in the 21st century and I will note in the spring of 2012 in all the proposals I made in my "If I Was On City Council" articles one of my favorites of the time was my proposal to redevelop Bel Air Mall into the "world's largest shopping mall" and I noted at the time the combined interior square footage of Bel Air Mall and Springdale Mall to support my belief that the Mobile area could support it as compared to other metropolitan areas that would have several smaller malls dispersed throughout Mobile had always had Bel Air and Springdale next to each other separated by Airport Boulevard and so "mall traffic" in Mobile was always concentrated and for many poor planning decisions that dot the landscape of Mobile history since 1940 one of the smarter ones was the centralization of malls into a core area.

But the idea for the "supermall" was based on the idea of increasing Bel Air Mall to the largest mall in the world and using the site of Springdale Mall for other uses and then seeing density development in the Bel Air and Springdale Mall area complexes with parking garages designed to spur density and essentially this is development of density that in modern urban planning is of the "edge city" concept but it was an idea of developing density that at the time would leave the surrounding suburban style areas left largely intact as they are currently developed but I thought that you could get some high rises both residential and commercial into the area and that this could help rejuvenate the surrounding areas and I wanted to see Bel Air Mall converted from the classic kind of suburban mall it is to a more urban mall.

However, the 2010's saw the mall as a concept begin to wear with time as many malls in the United States now post high vacancy rates and Bel Air Mall is no exception and in the 2010's was the scene of a number of violent incidents and I think to what the malls were in my childhood when you still had Montgomery Ward as a major store and a key anchor of Springdale Mall and when Springdale Mall was a mall that like Bel Air Mall was one with a walkway and then stores on the sides because even by 2012 Springdale Mall had ceased to be portioned out as a traditional mall and now the structure held space for a few large retailers and of course in 2012 Sears still helped to serve as an anchor to Bel Air Mall but Sears is gone and even when Sears was around the side of the parking lot from the back of Sears out to Bel Air Boulevard would often resemble the kind of dusty scene from a western movie where you expect tumbleweeds to roll on by.

I can concede in retrospect perhaps upgrading Bel Air Mall into "the largest mall in the world" may not have turned out well in hindsight though in 2011 malls nationwide as a whole were still faring well and only began to have serious problems as a business model in a dramatic way from 2015 onward but what it is also true is what I proposed may have made Bel Air Mall a shining star in an otherwise declining sector as I also wanted to see upgrades that would have recruited retailers into the updated Bel Air that currently do not come to any space in Mobile but I no longer favor the super mall concept

though at this time believe Bel Air can be preserved but it sits smack dab in my proposed area for "Downtown West" and basically it would be transformed from a suburban style mall to an urban style mall but I do believe bringing density in that area will ultimately save Bel Air Mall and so then then question becomes what to do with Springdale Mall though again greater density and the kind of development I propose where we shift parking into high story garages to reclaim former pavement for buildings could allow Springdale Mall to return to what it once was but given that Springdale Mall was out of use as a traditional mall with walkways and stores even during the first term of Mayor Sam Jones it seems like it may never be viable for that kind of use again but that is actually some very centrally located real estate and far more productive uses can be made of that land given where it is geographically within the city limits and the transportation network that abuts it.

In general though my idea for development in the new central business district (ie "New Downtown", "Downtown West", etc) is that in the area I have designated in this book as "Area A" this would be a straight redevelopment project of the area trying to overlay a traditional grid pattern on it and development of the area with underground utilities but with the highest density zoning throughout and literally it is the creation of a new high rise district from scratch similar to how Westshore developed in Tampa.

It is again instructive to look at the development of the San Francisco Bay area and in particular the development of San Francisco and the city of Oakland across San Francisco Bay which has traditionally been the county seat of Alameda County because from its very beginning San Francisco was a city based on international trade and high finance related thereto and Oakland was developed as an industrial center once called "the Detroit of the West" and the development of Silicon Valley began through the development of radio technology and transistors for the military even back prior to World War II and before in the Santa Clara County region.

In the 1980's, Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis (1975-1979, 1983-1991) was credited with the "Massachusetts Miracle" economic boom of the 1980's and based his presidential campaign in 1988 on it but if anyone had been doing comparison at the time they may have discerned that it had little to do with Dukakis himself and rather with decisions made before him and I want to go back to the decision that Governor Luther Hodges (1954-1961) made in North Carolina in the 1950's to back the Research Triangle project (later serving as the head of the Research Triangle as a private sector executive in the 1960's) and consider that during that time what Stanford University had begun with a similar style research project in Silicon Valley in the early 1950's in what was then the epicenter of technical development as it existed in the United States at the time you had a similar project undertaken by MIT and a similar area of high tech development akin to Silicon Valley within Santa Clara County and to the Research Triangle Area in North Carolina developed in the Boston suburbs along Route 128 powered by the cooperation of MIT and other universities but also by a great degree of military spending and so the tech corridor in eastern Massachusetts should properly be considered as a sort of synthesis of both the model that Silicon Valley developed on and the model that the Research Triangle area developed on.

In the case of what I propose in Area A you will have one of the largest by square mile "central business district" areas in the United States and starting from scratch with an area specifically developed along the lines of Smart Growth and New Urbanism with that much land available can honestly become the hottest development district in the Western Hemisphere, "Dubai on the Gulf of Mexico" if you will and I think Dubai is the proper example because in the case of Dubai it is literally a

case of “we will build it and they will come” and generally this is what I envision within the entire proposed new central business district Areas A-E and in those areas total you have over 8 square miles of development space and to give a comparison the whole of Manhattan Island/New York County within New York City is about 14 square miles and refer to the square mile territories of the number of cities I cited prior and while I did not list the official “central business district” of New York City in prior tables consider that much of New York City is developed in the pattern that in almost every other city gets the area so developed designated as the “downtown central business district” as in most cities houses were spread further apart especially in the cities that were primarily built out after the automobile became ubiquitous in the United States.

My grandfather for example spent his earliest years in a Brooklyn neighborhood known as Bensonshurst and Bensonhurst is generally seen as THE “Little Italy” within the entire borough of Brooklyn and he spent his early years on 72nd Street in the vicinity of where 20th Avenue comes in not that far from the original town site of New Utrectht which was settled by the Dutch colonists in the 1600’s back when New York City was New Amsterdam but Bensonhurst is generally an area where the commercial districts, the buildings in terms of heights if not exterior design are similar to those seen on Dauphin Street in Mobile in the historic Lower Dauphin (LoDa) area and the housing in the neighborhood is not all that similar from that seen in the opening credits of the TV show “All In The Family” which is set in Queens but persons who are versed in New York City history actually look at All In The Family from a different lens than those who don’t because of course Archie has a German surname in “Bunker” and to understand that you have to understand the history of the German immigrant community in New York and how Germany being on the wrong side of America in two World Wars played a part in much of German New York forgetting its heritage when it historically had been one of the key immigrant groups in the outer boroughs of the city and also because it was generally the territory that Archie Bunker lived in that was represented by Geraldine Ferraro in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1979-1985 and so when she was the Democratic Vice-Presidential nominee in 1984 she was “Archie Bunker’s Congresswoman” but to focus on Bensonhurst again here is a neighborhood as officially designated by New York City that has 2.95 square miles and 150,000 residents.

If you want to compare the territory within the Hank Aaron Loop to Bensonhurst, and this is not an exact comparison as Bensonhurst is generally low mid-rise of a kind often seen in the outer boroughs of New York City but generally at a maximum of .4 square miles if you had just a Bensonhurst style development pattern within the territory of the Hank Aaron Loop you would still have around 20,000 residents living within it (versus the 1,000 or so now) and remember the high rises of the Hank Aaron Loop generally all have more height than the tallest building in Bensonhurst.

The Bensonhurst development pattern within the whole of the territory of the CBD I envision would yield a population of likely in excess of 400,000 within the territory and remember Bensonhurst is developed at a lower density than I want to see in this district, far lower, as it is basically along the lines in density terms of the row house neighborhoods of Baltimore and Philadelphia. But perhaps a better idea of what density can be shown by the neighborhood of Gravesend which borders Bensonhurst within Brooklyn and is part of an area of western Brooklyn that has been historically known for its large Italian-American population (other neighborhoods of it include Bath Beach and Bay Ridge, Bay Ridge being referred to as “the guinea gangplank” in the dialogue of Wolf of Wall Street on the part of Naomi due its long recognition as an Italian neighborhood) and so it is now appropriate to focus on Gravesend as another example to try and demonstrate density.

Gravesend has 1.14 square miles and a population of 30,000 which if you apply it to the Hank Aaron Loop and territory therein to be developed at a Gravesend level would be about 10,000 residents within the territory and there have been a number of plans for the Hank Aaron Loop enclosed territory that have envisioned "10,000 residents downtown" and it should be noted that within the Mobile of 1860 and the city limits that were at the time you had closer to 20,000 residents than 10,000 residents living within the territory of the current Hank Aaron Loop at the time.

Another Brooklyn neighborhood to focus on is Canarsie and Canarsie has around 89,000 residents in a territory of 2.9 square miles and so a Canarsie level development pattern in the territory of the Hank Aaron Loop within Mobile would be around 11,000 residents. I want to extend this theory for a second and go to the current developed land area of the city of Mobile which is generally around 110 square miles or so and then do the Bensonhurst development level density on Mobile proper and if you had just the Bensonhurst level of density and development within the whole of the developed land territory of the city of Mobile you would have a city of 5,600,000. If you took the whole legal corporate city limits of the city of Mobile that includes all the wetlands of the Tensaw River delta to the east of Highway 43 (which includes Big Bayou Canot which is where the Sunset Limited crashed in 1993) there would be around 8,140,000 residents in the City of Mobile and remember the "Bensonhurst development pattern" is not all that big in the way of big high rise skyscrapers but is rather more the stereotypical pattern of the outer borough neighborhood in New York City and it should be remembered New York City as a whole between the Five Boroughs has more land incorporated in the city than the city of Mobile and at consolidation in 1898 the intention really was to create "the super city to end all cities" but if you had the Manhattan level of development within the whole of the city limits of New York City you would have close to 20,000,000 residents in the Five Boroughs but to much of America the image of New York is that of New York County and Manhattan Island and not that say of Brooklyn and Queens even though about 2/3's of the population of New York City actually lives either in Kings County or Queens County and so the experience of the typical New York City resident in terms of the cityscape they see daily is far more like that of Bensonhurst than that of the skyscraper canyons of Manhattan.

The point in all of this is it is possible to get a very high level of density within the area of the new "central business district" that I have designated and it should be noted that the total corporate limits of the city of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania (co-extensive with Philadelphia County) is roughly around the same as that of the city of Mobile and there are 1.6 million residents of the city and county of Philadelphia and the city peaked at a little over 2 million in 1960 and in the whole of New York City there are about 300 square miles and 100 square miles of that is in Queens and so New York City has to the outsider a surprising number of single family homes though generally back yards in New York City in those neighborhoods will be smaller than those typically seen in the post-1956 areas of Mobile.

Jamaica in Queens produced President Donald Trump, Governor Mario Cuomo, and one of my grandfather's Gregna uncles died there when Ed Koch was Mayor and when Donald Manes ran Queens as his own fiefdom and in Jamaica there are 53,000 people living in 1.7 square miles (over 200,000 in "Greater Jamaica") but when you do the numbers if you had a "Jamaica level" development pattern in the Hank Aaron Loop territory you would generally have 12,000-15,000 persons living in the territory therein. So understand you look at someone like Donald Trump whose main mark on the American urban landscape was high rises in central business districts but the surroundings he grew up in were not

that different than those my grandfather grew up in, the same kind of surroundings that Mario Cuomo, Andrew Cuomo, and so forth grew up in.

The neighborhood of Bath Beach in Brooklyn, generally bordering Bensonhurst and Gravesend in southwestern Brooklyn, has 30,000 residents in .75 square miles and so if the territory within the Hank Aaron Loop was developed along the lines of Bath Beach you would see around 15,000 or so residents within the territory enclosed by the Hank Aaron Loop.

The Brickell District of Miami has 32,000 residents within 1.19 square miles and so in density terms if you applied Brickell density (which in theory is roughly on par with the density of Canarsie in Brooklyn) to the territory within the Hank Aaron Loop you would have around 11,000 residents in it and Brickell is interesting because it once had a development pattern similar to much of post-1956 annexation Mobile but over time demand rose and rose and you began to see development along Brickell Avenue that was in the pattern of what we now refer to as edge city style development but since 2000 has undergone Manhattanization

However the development style in Brickell is very different from the development style in Bensonhurst or Canarsie as Brickell is very commercial heavy and is also generally a high rise district with some of the most expensive residential units in the state of Florida and indeed the entire Southeast and much of the United States outside of San Francisco and New York City located within the Brickell district. So in Brickell what you have are a number of high rises going higher than 500 feet in the air but not all that many condos and so for a comparison readily available to a Mobilian consider some of the taller condo complexes in Orange Beach like Phoenix, Turquoise Place, and so forth where you have buildings 350 feet high or taller and primarily luxury condos and so you have all these tall edifices and not that many units and you have an idea of the kind of high rise residential that predominates the Brickell district in Miami.

Of course an alternate way of considering Brickell as a district in Miami is if you apply the Brickell development pattern to the total developed territory in the city of Mobile then you would have a city of 2.96 million and if you applied it to the total legal area of the city of Mobile (and this would require draining some swampland as the wetlands east of Highway 43 and generally north of Magazine-Plateau-Africatown are included) it would yield a city of 4.32 million and so you are actually looking at lower populations possible in the territory using the Brickell pattern of development rather than using a pattern more like Bensonhurst or Canarsie.

Midtown Atlanta represents another high rise district that arose within the city of Atlanta and it was once a residential area not unlike Midtown Mobile but as the Greater Atlanta metro area grew and grew and grew across north central Georgia you saw density develop within it over time and it became a place where high density residential developed because there was far more demand to live there than there was space and this is usually how Manhattanization sets in in any urban district in any city in any metropolitan area. Midtown Atlanta has around 42,000 residents in a space of 3.8 square miles but of course some areas have greater density than others but it is generally a pattern where you have Brickell style high rises (and Midtown began such development a few years earlier than Brickell) and then neighborhoods of houses more along the lines of Mobile density and in both Greater Atlanta and Greater Miami you have high rise districts and then almost tract housing residential districts and part of this is how Southern cities always developed because the biggest city in the South in 1860 was New Orleans and while New Orleans had some of what you would consider “row houses” the kind of row

house style developments that are the hallmark of neighborhoods in New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore simply never came to New Orleans (nor were they that common in Chicago either) and in 1860 Mobile was the fourth city of the South and only was smaller than New Orleans, Charleston, and Richmond and the only Southern city that historically saw any “row house” development on a large scale was Richmond and in the case of Richmond, it was a city that took more as its benchmark in terms of larger cities influencing development styles Washington DC and Baltimore.

But in the South, New Orleans was held as the ultimate paragon of development along with Charleston and you go to most Southern cities that were significant in 1860 and generally you will see some local variations (like between Charleston and New Orleans) but the commonalities are greater than the differences and Savannah always lived in the shadow of Charleston to an extent, Mobile in the shadow of New Orleans and so the tendency for houses to be set apart on lawns or at least courtyards in the front separate from other buildings that typified antebellum architecture in New Orleans and Mobile, that basically set the pace for urban development in the entire region and then in the Southern uplands when those cities began developing like Memphis, Atlanta, Charlotte, and eclipsing the older ports the idea of the “row house” as it exists in Baltimore just never came to mind and Louisville did have some row house areas and of course Louisville borders the state of Ohio and Cincinnati played a large influence on the development of Louisville as an example city but simply put when you are in the outer boroughs of New York once you get away from pure row houses and brownstones the detached houses were heavily influenced by them and it is a pattern of development and arranging density that just was not all that common in Southern cities because again Charleston and New Orleans, then filtered down through Mobile and Savannah basically influenced the region’s idea of what a city should look like as a “Southern city should be a Southern city” and to the extent that Richmond departs from this as much as anything else has to do with the conception that Virginia has always had of itself and then of Richmond of itself within Virginia.

My vision for the new central business district, “Downtown West” if you will, “Dubai of the Gulf of Mexico” is generally with the territory I designated Areas A-E generally “skyscraper canyons” and generally in an area of territory greater than 8 square miles and the idea is for this central business district to have as its primary competitors Atlanta, Houston, Miami, and Dallas within the Southeast (and increasingly Nashville) and to bring Mobile into a new league as a city, the league it was in in terms of international business in 1859.

The Brickell development pattern within the designated district would lead to an in-district population of around 170,000-200,000 within the territory of the territory I have designated for the new central business district which would be a lower population in the same territory than if a Bensonhurst or Canarsie mode of development is used.

The city of Detroit in Michigan was once the fourth largest city in the United States and has 138 square miles where the population peaked at 1.85 million in 1950 and where today the population is estimated a 670,000 which represents a decline of 43,000 residents over the decade from the 713,000 reported in 2010 and this has been as the process of gentrification as seen in other cities has begun establishing itself in select parts of Detroit and in 1960 Detroit and Philadelphia were similar size cities and Chicago was a larger city more like Detroit than Philadelphia but it was a number of bad urban policy decisions that led Detroit to where it is today but I use the example of Detroit because again like Philadelphia it possesses a land area of developed land on par with Mobile and it is possible in terms of

the swampland east of 43 when drained in accordance with my vision the maximum land area of the city may be about what the land area of Detroit is and so this makes Detroit well worth study.

Detroit is more like Chicago and less like Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York City in that the mode of development in Detroit was primarily that of the detached single family home in neighborhoods centered around major commercial boulevards originally augmented by streetcars but which later adapted to the car centered lifestyle of 20th century America and so it is a pattern of development in some ways similar to that of New Orleans historically and it should be noted in the outer boroughs of New York City you usually have a main commercial street like Magazine Street is in New Orleans or Dauphin Street within the Hank Aaron Loop territory is with residential blocks abutting it but with enough mixture between the commercial main streets and residential side streets for walkable neighborhoods but Detroit is another example of sort of the maxing out of what one can do with single family detached residential but Mobile and most other cities in the Sun Belt have as one advantage in development that as the suburban designed areas fall into decay they can be retrofitted into more dense areas and for many core city propers in the South which are often also county/parish seats ultimately this will be the only way forward to increase population in the main city. Atlanta and Miami have of course shown this and I believe increasingly the same may prove true of the consolidated city-parish of New Orleans-Orleans Parish, Jackson (Mississippi), Birmingham, Shreveport, Memphis, Columbia (South Carolina), Richmond, Raleigh, Durham, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Savannah, Charleston (South Carolina) outside of the historic peninsula and in particular in West Ashley, St. Louis, Kansas City (Missouri and Kansas), Norfolk, Portsmouth, Newport News, and other cities outside any conception of the historic “South” or “Southern states” I see this as apt to apply to include Los Angeles, San Diego, Seattle, Denver, Minneapolis, St. Paul (Minnesota), Omaha, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and actually the majority of cities in the United States.

In the case of Galveston in Texas it is simply not feasible per public opinion to destroy historic architecture but I do think in the more modern areas of the Galveston city limits it is possible to implement density to bring the city population to over 100,000 over time though Galveston at this point will be a resort city and its best path forward is to develop itself further as a resort and to try and attract the kind of arts and entertainment crowd that have powered gentrification in most American cities since 1990 but I think Galveston uniquely, especially given the emergence of Charleston (South Carolina) as a growing tech industry market since 2010 given the ways in which the city was made attractive by the tenure of Mayor Joseph P. Riley (1975-2016) and when you consider the observations of Dr. Richard Florida of how the venture capital growth in the San Francisco Bay area since 2008 was primarily in the city and county of San Francisco and I think Galveston Island can appeal to that market but ultimately in the case of Galveston and Charleston for them to reach their full potential as globally significant power players in the international economy, which Charleston was for a century, and which Galveston wanted to be on track for until disrupted by the Hurricane of 1900, both of those cities will have to consolidate with their counties which in the case of Galveston would be consolidated with Galveston County, Texas and the case of Charleston would be consolidation with Charleston County, South Carolina and the reason is in the historic cores you just cannot tear down old buildings for newer ones but depending on how suburban areas react it may well be better to just construct new high-rises anew but also because in either case consolidation with the containing county will put either city into the top 100 most populous cities in the United States and in a sense will allow a development pattern similar to Jacksonville or “Nashville-By-The-Sea” but Galveston County and Charleston County actually have similar topography and shape of county boundaries within their respective states which is another reason why I make the comparison though at this time Galveston is only beginning a new

transition into primarily being where wealthy people from Houston buy vacation homes whereas previously it was a place people lived as a primary residence.

My vision for the central business district I propose, and I realize I have brought a number of examples into this, is to be a district where the commercial activity of the city of Mobile in terms of high finance and the kind of Fortune 500 corporation type of economic activity where an equivalent corporation in 1855 being formed within America would have considered Mobile a key market (and Lehman Brothers itself was originally formed in Alabama and later moved to New York City) and I say "Dubai of the Gulf of Mexico" because generally if we lay it out in say 2023 then by 2043 I generally want the district to have average building heights of the commercial buildings running higher than the concurrent buildings of that time in the Brickell district of Miami because what I envision is the key financial and corporate district of any city of the Gulf of Mexico with a goal to actually have a greater concentration within this territory than even within downtown Houston or the main central business districts of Atlanta and part of this is generally I would want for most commercial buildings an average height of no smaller than 60 stories which in terms of maximizing stories in a building will usually lead to 750 foot tall buildings or higher and certainly in my plan structures taller than 1,000 feet in height will be built and the district will become competitive for structures in excess of 100 stories.

In terms of the residential within the district this district I envision as pure high rise and so in that sense more of the pattern of Brickell than Bensonhurst though in terms of height it might be appropriate in some of the district to use a pattern for density and building height similar to that of the Harlem district in Manhattan in New York as well as in a lot of the outer neighborhoods of Manhattan where generally the average residential building resembles in height the Van Antwerp Building on Dauphin Street in Mobile.

But I honestly envision a district where in any given day more than 400,000 people can work each day and I want to see a residential population of between 175,000-225,000 in the territory of the new central business district by 2045 but just within Manhattan such a large area of territory would have 900,000 residents and so if it is possible to steer development towards having 300,000 residents or more in this district by 2045 this is my preference.

For those wondering how this "can be accomplished given what is already there" it should be considered that the capital city of Brasila in Brazil was essentially dictated from scratch and then consider the growth rates of Las Vegas which when I was born in 1985 had a lower city proper and greater metropolitan area population than Mobile but is now emerging into one of the largest cities and metropolitan areas in the United States today in 2020 or the rapid growth Tampa saw between 1900-1930 or how Miami was a city that was basically built from scratch and how during the 1920's it was a resort town where the city and metro area within Dade County had a lower population than Mobile and which was generally a resort town that would attract some money after the collapse of the 1920's land boom but began a blossoming after World War II and which became a major financial center in the 1980's because people began showing proper respect to Miami and began making the appropriate investments needed for the city to reach its full potential.

It helps however to consider "what is there" and I first want to focus on Area A and within Area A as I have designated the territory within it that is west of Azalea Road and there are a few subdivisions that maintain some affluence right near Airport Boulevard with one neighborhood of really large mansions built post-1965 and then some remaining affluence in Jackson Heights near

Airport Boulevard which itself was being developed originally in the 1950's when Airport Boulevard was Grant Street but south of a certain point almost the entire area (and there are more than 10,000 residents within the area at this time, probably closer to 20,000) are within subdivisions where the housing stock most resembles Hillsdale off of Cody Road and Wolf Ridge Manor off of Wolf Ridge Road though the lots are generally larger in the subdivisions off of Wolf Ridge Road but it is a number of houses generally constructed originally to be 3/1 or 3/2 and often times not exceeding 1000 square feet and this is true of neighborhoods from Malibar Heights up through Greenwich Hills and the better part of the territory is considered to be part of the Greenwich Hills subdivision but this is generally now some of the cheapest real estate in the city of Mobile between Cody and 65 with really the only lower prices for the most part being in the neighborhoods off Athey Road (which have similar housing stock) and then some of the similar architecture neighborhoods of Wolf Ridge Road and that has historically been due to its proximity to Prichard but after the Mobile Gas spill of the late 2000's you saw a further depression of sale prices in Wolf Ridge Road neighborhoods.

You basically have housing stock that has units often sell below $50,000 in habitable condition and where very few parcels sell above $120,000 even when the average kind of middle class construction in Mobile County will be priced at $180,000 or higher and when those few subdivisions developed in the city even today are priced higher than that and targeted at more affluent buyers (such a development has been built near Pinehurst since the first term of Sam Jones, generally that sort of light brown tan colored brick for exteriors) but in this territory you generally have over 5 square miles (and that is probably an underestimate but I base that on the total square mileage area of zip code 36609 and the western boundary of 36609 is Hillcrest Road) but in this whole territory if you paid every homeowner triple the market price you would generally acquire title to the entire area of land for around $75,000,000 to $90,000,000 and this may well be an overestimate and this includes the commercial strips across Azalea, Cottage Hill, and then the lesser ones on Airport and University, and the apartment complexes and everything else.

This seems like a large sum of money to invest but remember this is roughly around the nominal cost of construction of Mobile Government Plaza in the early 1990's (which I view as a mistake and one of the biggest boondoggles of all time and I explain this in a later chapter) and remember the estimates for the total construction costs of Water Street Landing as proposed during the fourth term of Mayor Mike Dow which would have constructed 3 high mixed use high rises on Water Street on the old CSX site near the Arthur Outlaw Convention Center with the highest over 20 stories ran to over $80 million which when adjusted for inflation to 2020 dollars would be the equivalent of over $130 million and then look at the construction costs of many condo high rises in Orange Beach and Perdido Key today and to be rather blunt for what it generally costs to build one standard high rise greater than 30 stories in most of America that is generally more than it takes to buy out all of the current property owners within the territory bounded to the west by University, the north by Airport, the east by Azalea, and the south by Cottage Hill and that means when envisioning this area as a high rise district you are talking about a territory where built up if every single parcel went to a high rise similar to Brickell Avenue in terms of development the total invested in construction costs just within that territory would be in the mid to high hundreds of billions in 2020 dollars and when you include the total territory of Area A and then also add the territory within Areas B, C, D, and E it is a situation where literally building it up as I envision it will lead to over a trillion dollars with the value that represents as I write this in 2020 invested in development and so understand if the City of Mobile adopts as the plan that this is the way it is going to be, the entire totality of Area A can be had for under $120 million and when you expand out to all of the territory I demarcated in my proposal including

Areas B-E the most spent will be under $200 million and the only questions there are the malls and the Marriott.

And so you can basically have 8 square miles of the City of Mobile acquired for a purchase price of $200 million and most when the development potential even on the conservative side is in the hundreds of billions and so you are looking at in a rather short term once development kicks off according to plan ROI on any parcel in the district averaging no less than 500,000% ROI in terms of real value and the average will be more in the range of 1,000,000% to 2,000,000% ROI on any given investment and if we make it clear the city will support this and recruit it then it really is a case of "Dubai on the Gulf of Mexico" and build it and they will come.

I would say it would even be appropriate to have a program, given that I think that 1950's-1960's ranch style architecture is due for renewed popularity in the United States, to allow people to purchase ranch style houses from the territory to be transported brick by brick, plank by plank, to whatever site in the United States they desire.

I believe ultimately to get this accomplished will take private investment, public-private partnerships, and some public investments but if we pull this off and establish this new central business district, "Dubai of the Gulf of Mexico"

I would point out that the construction costs of the RSA Battle House Tower exceeded what the likely purchase price of the area between Azalea, University, Airport, and Cottage Hill would be even paying all current property owners three times the current fair market value of their properties so keep this in mind when you decide whether or not it is possible because everyone knows it is but you need the catalyst in order to spur the investment and initial purchases but a Romagnano Administration would certainly designate the district for such a development and make it clear this is "what is going to happen" in order to try and spur the necessary land purchases.

I should also note that some entity in Mobile County since 2000 and it may have been the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) and I am unsure of what entity but I know I have seen the map approved a plan tentatively and included a map of "road projects" to be done in Mobile County over the course of the next few decades and one of those road projects included the extension of Grelot Road across University Boulevard and basically through the area I have designated "Area A" and through that whole complex of subdivisions to meet up with Michael Boulevard and to even have a new interchange on I-65 constructed on Grelot/Michael which would be extended across I-65 so understand this in theory has already been voted on as a "good idea" in Mobile County and this holding more to a suburban mode of development based on having more automobile traffic through the city.

As I have stated before I am the great-grandson of Connie Bea Hope who had a TV show on WKRG from 1955-1981 and my great-grandmother's great-grandmother was Marguerite DeMouy Clements who married Anderson Clements in 1831 and for whom a precinct generally comprising modern day Tillman's Corner and Theodore was named for in the census of 1880 (Anderson Clements precinct) and her great-great-great uncle H.W. Clements was the primary owner of the sawmill on Dog River which is referred to in History of a Deep South State by Dr. Wayne Flynt (a book covering Alabama history into the early 1990's as it was published when Jim Folsom Jr. was Governor) but the great-great grandmother of Connie Bea (mother of Marguerite DeMouy Clements) was Irene Grelot who was married to Louis DeMouy who owned an inn in what is now downtown Mobile that hosted as

a guest General Marquis De Lafayette on his official visit to Mobile in the 1820's during the mayoralty of Samuel Garrow and so "Grelot Road" is named for a family I descend from from French colonial times and given that persons we know had the last name Grelot had it written "Gurlotte" during the early American period I have surmised that is the correct way to pronounce it in French and everyone pronouncing it "Gree-Lot" in Mobile is mispronouncing it and so I believe as part of an effort to spur greater economic ties with France and the Francophone world in general we need to embark on a campaign to encourage the proper pronunciation of "Grelot" in the city of Mobile.

I wanted to point out my Grelot descent because some may claim I want the road to be grander than it is because of that descent but remember it was during my own childhood that Grelot Road was completely a two lane thoroughfare that went no further west than Schillinger Road and I can remember when many of those subdivisions like Savannah Trace did not exist off of the road but it was four laned during the administration of Mayor Mike Dow (as was Cottage Hill Road which was a two lane road west of Hillcrest Road when I was a child and in 1990 the shopping center that houses Publix on Hillcrest Road did not exist and I recall going to a grocery store at Airport and Hillcrest in those times) because it had greater and greater amounts of traffic and shopping plazas were constructed some on Grelot Road after 2000 but if you notice most of the road from University to Schillinger is generally residential because in 1985 as a thoroughfare Grelot Road within the city of Mobile was comparable to what Girby Road is today, what Demetropolis Road was for most of its history until widened and connected to University, what Lloyds Lane is today (if Lloyds Lane had major crossing intersections) and it was developed in large part to have an east-west crossing road to have entrances to subdivisions off of between Airport and Cottage Hill because someone realized at some point that it was a planning mistake to have that huge block of subdivision on the street hierarchy pattern built between University, Airport, Azalea, and Cottage Hill without an east-west crossing road and if you look at a map you see Grelot Road is about roughly equidistant from Cottage Hill Road and Airport Boulevard.

Remember that the concept of "extending Grelot Road" was approved even though everyone knows at the intersection of University where Grelot has its current terminus if you walk across the street from the Grelot sidewalk and to the other bank of University Boulevard you walk smack dab into that apartment complex and so that was agreed to with the knowledge it would go through long term land that is currently in that apartment complex and so this has been an idea that has at least been agreed to in long range planning in Mobile County for 15 years or so now and my idea of a new central business district is a new wrinkle and of course Grelot Road will be central to it (and my vision there is a grand boulevard like Canal Street in New Orleans or Champs Elysee in Paris or Michigan Avenue in Chicago) but in this case it is because Grelot Road is a major 4 lane artery out to Schillinger Road business district (which as I noted in Area K I wanted to see greater density in along edge city lines) and the most direct way from Mobile Regional Airport to the territory of my proposed main central business district is down a connector from the Airport and right down Grelot Road as it actually generally is to get to points southward even now on the current development pattern and so Grelot Road is the case of a road originally developed for a completely different purpose that has evolved over time but because of where it is located and the traffic levels it already handles any road there no matter the name would have to be extended east of University and for my plans to become an even more major thoroughfare than it already is.

At this time I believe to accommodate the central business district I propose an interchange should seriously be considered for where the Grelot/Michael extension crosses I-65 but generally within the new central business district, "Dubai in Mobile", I want to see a district built that is like

most traditional central business districts like Manhattan and Center City in Philadelphia in being walkable and having a high component of mass transit use and it is often said “Mobile can’t have a subway system because of the water table” and a number of cities globally prove that incorrect (like New York City which is built largely on drained swampland) but much of the post 1956 areas of the city and especially most of my proposed central business district area are in the more hilly area and I do believe a study should be commissioned to determine whether Mobile can have an underground subway system because people have claimed “it can’t” but no one has ever actually commissioned a study to research the issue and it is time for the issue to be researched.

It should be remembered that Queens (co-extensive with Queens County, New York) is the largest borough in New York City geographically with around 100 square miles or roughly the developed land area of the city of Mobile and Queens generally does not have all that much in the way of high rises and has a development pattern in many neighborhoods similar to that of Bensonhurst but which over all actually is less dense on average than Brooklyn as in terms of density levels the boroughs go Manhattan, The Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island and detached single family homes with the kind of spacing seen in Dyker Heights in Brooklyn are rather common in Queens and there are over 2 million people living in the territory of the borough of Queens and Queens is expected to overtake Brooklyn as the most populous borough in New York City and remember before consolidation Brooklyn was one of the most populous cities in America whereas Queens at that time was still largely countryside with operating farms (the real purpose of consolidation I think may well have been to grab Queens for development) but I bring up Queens to show that Mobile in the current developed territory can accommodate far more residents and can do so even with single family detached housing (as this is the main form of housing in Queens still) if proper principles of New Urbanism and Smart Growth and retrofitting the street hierarchy base to a proper density promoting grid pattern are followed in the city and so Mobile actually has a large land area that can be redeveloped but if the current suburban street hierarchy plan is not retrofitted then the post-1956 areas will become the albatross that drag the city and area down over the course of the next 3 decades and so the proper steps to ensure growth occurs must be taken now.

And another interesting thing about the history of Brooklyn and perhaps the best way to illustrate it is with the political career of Larry Langford who served as Mayor of Birmingham in the 2000’s after previously serving as Mayor of Fairfield (a suburb of Birmingham in Jefferson County) and later on the Jefferson County Commission. There is actually a precedent from Brooklyn and New York City because Seth Low served as Mayor of Brooklyn from 1881-1885 when it was one of the largest cities in the country and was later a forerunner of Larry Langford in a sense as he served as Mayor of the consolidated city of New York from 1902-1904 and to be technical in New York City a Mayor under consolidation has always taken office on New Year’s Day and so when the calendar rings in on the New Year the Mayor is sworn in and so a Mayor will have 4 or 8 years but in New York parlance because they only served until New Year’s Eve of the previous year it will often appear in how the terms are delineated that they served 3 years or 7 years when they in fact served the full 4 or 8 years. But to be Mayor of Brooklyn in the 1880’s was to be Mayor of a city far larger than Mobile and it was seen as enough executive experience that his party sought him as a Mayoral candidate in the elections of 1901. Low is actually a figure I have some admiration for and he is someone who served both as president of what became Columbia University after his tenure as Mayor of Brooklyn and then later served as the head of Tuskegee University in Alabama after his term as Mayor of New York City and historically is one of the most internationally prominent presidents the university ever had because

again, to have a former Mayor of New York City serve as your head and to come down to Macon County, Alabama to do it was a big deal in those days.

Of course the career of Cowboy Jim Dahlman serves as another example of someone who served as Mayor of a smaller city before moving up to a larger mayoralty as Dahlman, a Texas native who left the state for Nebraska and a real Texas cowboy in the 1870's, served as Sheriff of Dawes County, Nebraska from 1888-1894 and served as Mayor of Chandron, Nebraska from 1894-1895 but it was during his time in Chandron that he became associated with Congressman William Jennings Bryan who was a rising political star in the 1890's and his association with Bryan (who was Democratic presidential nominee in 1896, 1900, and 1908 and later served in the cabinet of President Woodrow Wilson as well as an early promoter of Florida) helped make his later political career as he turned down an offer to become the police chief in Omaha in 1896 and spent 4 years as the head of the Nebraska Democratic Party (and notably Bryan carried his own home state in 1896 but Nebraska was once a home of prairie populism where Weaver had done well in 1892) but what he will always be noted for is over 20 years of cumulative service as Mayor of Omaha from 1906-1918 and 1921-1930, dying in office in 1930 and prior to his second stint as Mayor had been appointed a U.S. Marshal by President Woodrow Wilson in 1920 and Mayor Dahlman had several notable accomplishments including winning the city a greater degree of home rule from the state government though his historical legacy is marred, like many politicians of that era, on race issues and in his case because his political allies were among the agitators in the Omaha race riots that occurred during the Red Summer of 1919.

But if you look back to the Mobile of the 1850's, Dauphin Street was one of the premiere commercial districts in the entire United States and far more fortunes were made in the city then than now and the city was fundamentally of a different character in 1855 and far more of the "big city" nature at 30,000 residents then than at 200,000 residents today and one of the key purposes of designating what would be geographically one of the largest central business districts in the United States (and if you build out the full 8 square miles it would be larger than the one in Los Angeles geographically and fully built out in territory/area would be second only to Manhattan Island as a whole in New York City within the entire United States) and while in theory high rise development in the United States seems proportionally less in 2020 than in say 1960 in many of the developing economies of the world they are currently building skylines meant to rival any American city and so these countries, who view economic growth is their primary goal, the cities they admire to and look up to and follow no matter what their heads of state may say over an issue of foreign relations, the cities they take as their models for how to do things are the cities of the United States as they developed in the 20th century and that they are building far more impressive skylines in Dubai, Shanghai, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Doha, than most cities in America with really few American cities in competition and part of it represents their confidence in the future much as the skyscraper boom of the 1920's represented in the United States as well as the lack of confidence we have in the states.

I want to make this clear that I dislike the system of government in the People's Republic of China and we are international competitors in foreign relations and I prefer to side with human rights and democracy and liberty whenever possible but I have great admiration for Chinese culture and the Chinese people and in terms of urban planning and doing cities correctly China held most of the world's major cities during the long period of time when Europe was in the Dark Ages and in the 21st century one thing the Chinese are doing well is urban planning and the development of their cities and so I will not hide I side with those who want freedom for Hong Kong and Macau but I will also say Shanghai is and has been one of the world's great cities for a long time and in 2020 Shanghai is a

model of a city that is run well and I would say to other Mayors, no you don't copy the authoritarianism of China and as an American politician I am expected to say that but in terms of urban planning and how to bring economic growth to a city Shanghai is a model and there are things I have learned from the study of Shanghai and one thing the Chinese have managed to do well is the idea of the indoor shopping mall in an otherwise urban district that thrives and isn't falling into bankruptcy the way a large number of such malls in the United States currently are.

In the case of the United States the majority of high rise construction since 2000 in the country has actually been residential construction in the 300-600 foot high range in "downtown" central business district areas that have become trendy arts and entertainment districts that otherwise had been low rise but where the demand for residences is so great that new residential towers are built to accommodate the demand but you have not seen the corresponding demand for high rise commercial this century as increasingly more and more jobs are moving into inner ring suburbs and so there will be people with an office in the inner ring suburbs or away from the downtown core in the main city who want the "downtown lifestyle" and so buy a unit in one of these high rises and then commute out from the high rise district everyday to work and it has been a feature of the 21st century in America as noted by Dr. Richard Florida in his book The New Urban Crisis that today's affluent in America are choosing to live primarily back in the trendy arts and entertainment areas in the core cities of metropolitan areas and then in the exurbs while it is the inner ring first generation suburbs (and similar areas within city limits of major cities) bearing the brunt of urban decay and economic decline in the 21st century (the majority of the current incorporated developed territory of Mobile consisting of such areas) but that the choice of neighborhood is often irrespective of job locations as it is some of the wealthiest and most educated buying in the urban high rises who will drive a Maserati out to their top management job in the morning and then drive back to their downtown high rise condo in the evening and the only real cities seeing major commercial high rise construction today are Miami, New York City, Chicago, and a few others and elsewhere even in cities like Atlanta and Nashville the high rise construction today leans largely residential and so in that sense what I propose for a central business district is in theory countervailing current norms but notice I said "Miami" and to some extent within the Southeast the city of Miami is our main model and competitor in this venture but basically what I envision is not simply a business district in the Southeast or an American business district but is intended to be one of the key corporate and financial districts in the entire Western Hemisphere and among the top 100 such districts on Earth and so I envision a district where globally we are in the class of and competing with cities like Shanghai, Doha, and so forth which is why I describe my concept as "Dubai of the Gulf of Mexico" because in Dubai they basically created the "Manhattan of the Persian Gulf" out of thin air and we would be basically doing the same and I believe by designating such a large area and making sure the city government will back it that the investments will come and again on average I want an average building height over the entire designated territory of no less than 750 feet when fully developed and so when a standard like that is applied remembering that the tallest building on the Gulf Coast outside of Houston is One Shell Square in New Orleans at just under 700 feet you realize what I am shooting for and the transforming effect this can have if we succeed in this endeavor.

When the RSA Battle House Tower was completed in 2007 it was one of the 200 tallest buildings on the entire planet and so for a brief time when you pulled up the "200 tallest buildings in the world" list on the Emporis website you pulled up the RSA Tower and "Mobile, United States" but of course there has been an international high rise boom since then and you look at the minimum height of the 200th tallest building in the world as of September 19, 2020 it is the Capital City Tower in Moscow, Russia which is 990 feet tall and 76 stories above ground and 6 below and was completed in

the late 2000's and is an all residential use building which at the time of completion was the tallest building on the European continent and when you look at the top 200 list today it disproportionately consists of buildings in cities in developing countries and not in the United States and understand with a building almost 1,000 feet tall as # 200 it is likely that unless a taller building is built in Atlanta this decade there will be no buildings in Atlanta on this list by 2030.

I will explain in later chapters what it will take to develop the new central business district to its full potential but suffice to say I have a vision of it being a place where 400,000 or more jobs can be but it may end up that as a high rise district it ends up being where 400,000 people live and remember generally overall Manhattan has population per square mile densities close to 100,000 per square mile over the entirety of Manhattan Island.

The transportation plan that calls for the extension of Grelot Road that was passed in the 2000's also called for bypasses to be constructed around the city of Mobile and I am now coming to support that because ultimately I believe the best strategy to deal with the congestion on the Bayway involves a bypass of the city of Mobile and a northern route to cross the Mobile River (the second part advocated by Mayor Jones when he ran for a third term in 2013) and I will cover that in later chapters more thoroughly.

But if you are going to take away anything from Chapter 4 it is that this new central business district that I propose is vital to the future of the Mobile Bay region and is the only thing that will bring the city of Mobile out of stagnation and if you want to be critical about it but for a period from about 1941-1965 generally the history of Mobile has been stagnation and slow growth since the cessation of hostilities and the restoration of American rule in 1865 and it is time for a new step forward and so before moving on to Chapter 5 where I will analyze the performance of all directly elected Mayors of the city of Mobile since 1985 I want to focus on the city of Johannesburg, South Africa and I want to do so because Johannesburg drew as its inspiration for its skyline the cities of the United States but South Africa was generally an untamed frontier land into the 20th century but what built Johannesburg was gold and diamonds and the mining thereof powered what became a very powerful financial sector and Johannesburg was in its early history a very fast growing boom town not unlike Mobile of the 1830's and 1840's or San Francisco of the 1850's.

I will discuss the importance of parking garages to my vision in a later section because centrally located parking garages are actually central to how I believe retrofitting should occur in all "suburban areas" being reconfigured for higher density but suffice to say by wiping the slate clean in Areas A-E and building a new proper parking garages can be properly designed and centrally located in accordance with the planned needs of the district so it can reach its greatest potential.

But I should make this clear, several generations of Mobilians, and especially the parents of us who go to high school on Old Shell Road, have complained of the "brain drain" of the city and how for several generations their kids leave Mobile because opportunities just aren't here.

Understand in the global economy as it is developing in the 21st century the ONLY way forward to end this brain drain is to among other things open up the new central business district I suggest and exactly where I suggest it and so if you want to reverse the brain drain of Mobile and start attracting talent rather than losing it then it is time to start following my plan for a new central business district so

that Mobile can become the Dubai of the Gulf of Mexico and fulfill its full potential rather than always being the city of perpetual potential.

And I want to close out the chapter by noting that in 1960 it was predicted that around our time the city of Mobile would have over 1 million residents and so in the past people have sought this kind of growth and have wanted to happen but it has never materialized prior.

Under my plan it can finally materialize and Mobile can return to the international prominence it once enjoyed in the 1850's.

END CHAPTER 4

EVALUATION OF MAYOR ARTHUR OUTLAW (1985-1989) WITH BACKGROUND

Mobile was founded as a French settlement at Fort St. Louis De Mobile in 1702 and was generally under the authority of a centrally appointed colonial administrator be it French, British, or Spanish until formal annexation into the United States after the war of 1812 which came about because Mobile was part of the territory of Florida that was included in the Republic of West Florida which seceded from Spanish Florida in 1810 and in fact Mobile is in Alabama today because of the events of this time period because the Republic of West Florida ended up seeing its territory divided into thirds when the state of Louisiana was admitted to the United States in 1812 with a third going to the state of Louisiana and so comprising the "Florida Parishes" of the state, a third went to Mississippi Territory which at that time consisted of the southeastern panhandle of Mississippi and the southwestern panhandle of Alabama south of 31 degrees north latitude (aka the 31st parallel), and then a third went back to Florida and became part of the current state of Florida which was admitted to the Union in the 1820's with future President Andrew Jackson being territorial governor and admitted to full statehood in the United States in 1845.

My 8th grade homeroom teacher Mrs. Beverly Finch, herself the granddaughter of Ben C. Rain that B.C. Rain High School on Dauphin Island Parkway is named for, took an Old Mobile view of the city's relationship with "the rest of Alabama" and imparted her view that "anything south of the 31st parallel isn't real Alabama" and generally the 31st parallel is the Alabama/Florida line until the Chattahoochee River which serves as both the boundary between Eastern and Central Time Zones and Alabama and Georgia and generally east of that the state of Georgia drops further south than the state of Alabama does and takes in territory that west of it would be in Florida.

Mobile is in Alabama in large part because when the state of Mississippi was admitted to the Union in 1817 and when the state of Mississippi was admitted to the union from the western half of Mississippi Territory the eastern half of Mississippi Territory became Alabama Territory and the division was designed to as much as possible evenly divide east and west and of course Alabama Territory was admitted to the Union as the state of Alabama in 1819 though Mobilians with deep roots often identify more with Louisiana or Florida than "the rest of Alabama" dependent often on their ethnic heritage, genealogical background, and religion and Mrs. Finch always made clear to us she identified more with Florida.

When Mobile was first brought into the United States as a part of Mississippi Territory the head of government was entitled "President" and the first "President of Mobile" was James Inerarity (1814-1815, 1816-1817) who through marriage of a Troulliet into the Inerarity's was related by marriage to the descendants of Charles Rochon though even by then "American" immigration had begun to swarm the colony in a way that would become common in New Orleans south of Canal Street prior to 1860 but not really in Pensacola until after the War of Secession and the timber boom of the 1870s-1880's.

Samuel H. Garrow is notable for having served as President of Mobile in the 1810's (1818-1819) and then two stints as Mayor (1824-1827, 1829-1831) under the new system and one thing about Mobile compared to other cities is that many cities at this time elected Mayors on a term to a year similar to the year term that a Roman Consul served in the Roman Republic but Samuel Garrow, Charles Langdon (1848-1851, 1852-1855), and Mitchell Withers (1855-1860, 1866-1867) all had among American major cities relatively long amounts of time in office and Addin Lewis (1820-1822,

1823-1823) had less time in his two stints but still for a Mayor of a city of Mobile's size at that point really rather long terms of office and so even early in Mobile history a tendency of a few political leaders within the city as a whole to develop factions and for city politics to revolve around them was rather common and John Everett (1827-1829, 1835-1836) also served two terms and Daniel Duval was twice chief executive of the city as he served as President from (1817-1818) and was the first Mayor of Mobile from 1819-1820.

Alphonse Hurtel (1875-1878) was the longest serving Mayor since R.H. Slough (1861-1865) who presided over the city during the War of Secession and was forced from office by federal bayonet.

Richard B. Owen presided over the government of the "Port of Mobile" from 1879-1888 which was formed mainly because the profligacy of Reconstruction era governments forced the city to declare bankruptcy in the late 1870's as did many Southern cities at the time.

Joe Rich served from 1888-1894 and was succeeded by Constantino Lorenzo Lavretta (1894-1897) who was one of the first Italian-American mayors of a major American city and may well have been the first Italian Catholic mayor of any city in the top 100 of the U.S. Census of its time.

John Bush continued the trend of Mayors serving in office longer from 1897-1900 and Tom Fry served from 1900-1902 and then there were two Mayors each serving a year in Walter Walsh and Charles McClean in the period of 1902-1904 but in 1904 the legendary Patrick J. Lyons rose to the mayoralty and he held it as the directly elected Mayor from 1904-1911 and then served as Mayor under the City Commission system from 1913-1914, 1915-1916, 1917-1918 and so Lyons had 10 years as Mayor between the systems and from 1911-1985 under the City Commission system the title of Mayor rotated annually but no Mayor under that system eclipsed the combined time in the office of Mayor between the system of Patrick J. Lyons who was the 40th Mayor of Mobile when he left office as the last directly elected Mayor in 1911 and even titans like Bates, Baumhauer, Langan, and Mims rotating the title as they did never managed 10 years as Mayor and the only Mayor of Mobile to serve in office longer than Patrick J. Lyons was Michael C. Dow from 1989-2005.

Arthur Outlaw was the 105th Mayor of Mobile in his directly elected term from 1985-1989 and so the majority of persons to hold the title "Mayor of Mobile" were simply the "Mayor of Mobile" as the title meant and rotated under the Mobile City Commission and under the City Commission the tendency was for a Commissioner to get elected and consolidate control over their portfolio and serve for a long time and often rotate the position of Mayor to themselves (Langan, Mims, Baumhauer) and Sandy Stimpson is the 108th Mayor of Mobile and whoever succeeds him will be the 109th Mayor of Mobile.

Prior to the War of Secession (1861-1865) Mobile anchored one of the most competitive congressional districts in the United States that saw a very high turnover rate and George Washington Owen held the seat for 6 years in the 1820's (he the great-grandson in law of my ancestor Charles Rochon) and later served a term as Mayor of Mobile in the 1830's but usually it worked the other way and Mayors of Mobile would run for the congressional seat and more often than not lose such races but in those times it was seen as a natural step for a Mayor to run for Congress and Owen would be the longest holder of the Mobile congressional seat until the 1870's when a completely new pattern of holding the territory set in in the district to where Bradley Byrne (2014-2021) has now had the shortest tenure as the directly elected holder of the Mobile congressional seat since Oscar Lee Gray from 1915-

1919 and generally his tenure is the shortest post-1874 after Herndon, Gray, and Jones and except for Gray, Byrne, and Bonner every holder of that seat directly elected from a Mobile based district has served at least 16 years in office since 1897 making it one of the historically more secure seats in the country and once you have it you have it till you quit.

I discuss this because District 3 County Commissioner Jerry Carl has actually successfully moved from "municipal level" politics to being the next Congressman for Southwest Alabama though with Carl's age it is questionable how long he can hold that seat though certainly the tenure of at least Byrne or Bonner is expected as this is THE highlight of his political career without question and Carl achieved what Mobile City Commissioner Charles Trimmier failed at in 1964 and so in the ranks of Mobile political history it is a substantial achievement for Commissioner Carl.

Since 1985 the only directly elected Mayor of Mobile to fail to win a second term was Arthur Outlaw in 1989 but William Sands "Sandy" Stimpson ran on a two term pledge and the thing about that (and why you should never do such a thing if the office is not term limited from a politician's point of view unless you have a clear path for something else) people generally hold you to such things and Stimpson has of course discovered what Mike Dow and Sam Jones knew before him, namely that Bess Casper Rich really wants to be Mayor of Mobile.

But I now want to evaluate the performance of the four directly elected elected Mayors of Mobile since 1985 and point out where I perceive strengths and weaknesses and where I agree and where I disagree with their performance in office.

(1) Mayor Arthur R. Outlaw (1985-1989), the 105th Mayor of Mobile: I think Arthur Outlaw may have wanted to be Governor of Alabama and I say this because he was Chairman of the Alabama Republican Party at the same time he was Mayor of Mobile and so he had a disproportionate influence on patronage decisions under Presidents Reagan and Bush while also serving in the office of Mayor of Mobile and Outlaw reached the zenith of his power upon his election as Mayor of Mobile in 1985.

In 1982, Montgomery Mayor Emory Folmar (1979-1999) was the Republican nominee for Governor of Alabama and was essentially a "sacrificial lamb" candidate in an election that saw Governor George C. Wallace (1963-1967, 1971-1979, 1983-1987) win his fourth term to the state's highest office but in the fracas of 1986 of course after "cream rises to the top" and "write it in, write it in" there is no question that whoever was Republican nominee would have been elected Governor of Alabama in 1986 and for a time Folmar considered making the 1986 race and I imagine he greatly ended up regretting not making the 1986 race given the whole "Guy Hunt affair."

But had Outlaw been re-elected as Mayor in 1989, remember most political experts in Alabama did not expect Guy Hunt to win a second term in 1990 (and I don't think he would have against Attorney General Don Siegelman) but Outlaw had been on a Mobile Carnival Association (MCA) court in the late 1940's and Outlaw would have had in 1994 two terms as Mayor of Mobile (and it is a question of whether he would have run for re-election in 1993 had he won a second term in 1989) and he would have also been Chairman of the Alabama Republican Party basically in control of state patronage under Republican presidents while also controlling the city of Mobile and let's say Paul Hubbert had been elected Governor of Alabama in 1990….Mayor Outlaw having had a successful two terms as Mayor of Mobile and seen as more "moderate" than Folmar would have made a very

compelling gubernatorial candidate in 1994 and knowing how money and power undulate in the state of Alabama there is no question "Mayor Arthur Outlaw since 1985 or 1985-1993" as the Republican nominee for Governor of Alabama while also controlling the state party would have defeated "Governor Paul Hubbert" in the 1994 election cycle and would have likely had a greater margin of victory against Governor Jim Folsom Jr (1993-1995) than the resurgent Fob James did in his comeback bid (1979-1983, 1995-1999).

Outlaw had served as Public Safety Commissioner of Mobile from 1965-1969 and it should be noted that it was under Commissioner Outlaw that my grandfather rose into the ranks of key brass in the Mobile Police Department. Outlaw of course had been a key executive in the Morrison's Corporation which is where Connie Bea Hope got her start prior to television and it was out of the Morrison's Corporation that the Ruby Tuesday restaurant chain was born.

There used to be "an old Outlaw place" which was a mansion and estate on Highway 45 that is now abandoned on territory within the corporate limits of the city of Prichard on the way to Kushla (and it should be noted that the Kushla Water District actually includes territory within and without the city limits of Prichard). The Morrison's Corporation was a national chain even in the 1940's as Ruby Tuesday's is today and so Outlaw developed a far greater business repertoire and knowledge of the "outside world" than a lot of Mobile business community leaders of his time because he was an executive in a larger company that operated across America and so had to make a lot of business trips that many other business persons in Mobile did not have to make and in that sense he was a sort of a throwback to the kind of Mobile city politician who often came to Mobile with only nickels in their pocket and soon become millionaires as cotton factors that were often seen making a mark in local affairs in the boom years from 1830-1860.

Of course as Mayor of Mobile, Outlaw had stronger working relationships with many Democratic legislators from Mobile County with whom he had supporters in common than the administration of Governor Hunt necessarily and I am reminded of the interview that Charlie Graddick gave to Steve Flowers in 2012 when he was running for Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court where he pointed out that he was elected District Attorney of Mobile County as a Republican in 1974 at a time when no one ran on that ballot hardly in Mobile County or anywhere else in Alabama but that "Outlaw urged him to switch to the Democratic Party in order to be able to run for Attorney General" because of course in 1978 the Democratic nominee would always win the "November general election" for the office of Attorney General of Alabama as had been the case in the state since the elections of 1874.

I actually believe Mayor Outlaw did a good job as Mayor and I honestly believe he wanted to be Mayor for a long time and that the directly elected mayoralty with much of the old authority that the office had last held under Mayor Pat Lyons in 1911 had great appeal to him but remember at this point the political experience Outlaw had had was one term as Public Safety Commissioner from 1965-1969 where the title of "Mayor" rotated to him for a year and then he had had a brief return to the City Commissioner after Doyle left office in the 1980's but Mayor Outlaw came into office facing a 7 member Mobile City Council from different districts of the city and to comply with the *Bolden* decision of 1980 and Interstate 65 became very much the political dividing line but in a City Council of seven members where you had four seats designed to be "white" and three designed to be "black" but where the core of Mayor Outlaw's support within the white community was generally in Spring Hill and Midtown but the loss of former Mayor Langan in the District 2 City Council race in 1985 marked a

period where racial division was still heightened as it had been in the 1970's but Mayor Outlaw was faced with a city legislative body where they all had their own ambitions and their own goals and where Outlaw had been a successful political wire puller in the 1970's into the early 80's guiding his favored candidates to victory in many races in the office of Mayor it was a different thing entirely and he was an older man facing a younger City Council.

For example, take the example of City Councilman John Peavy of District 7 (1985-1993, 2004-2005), who had run a strong but unsuccessful challenge to Finance Commissioner Gary Greenough in 1981 as a young man and who clearly had ambitions of being Mayor of Mobile himself (as he ran in 2005) and personalities like Irmatean Watson (1985-1993), Reggie Copeland Sr. (1985-2013), Jane Baxter (1985-1993) and of course Clinton Johnson (1985-2009) and with Outlaw here is someone who had been in business his whole life and who in local politics had been a wire puller and something of a kingmaker but the Mayor and Council was just something that was new to everyone and like in many major cities the tendency in Mobile media is actually to be hyperfocused on Mobile city politics and far more either than state legislature or Congress and he was dealing with far more spotlight than usual and he was at the helm facing opposition on this that and the other and so faced a Mobile City Council full of members after their own ambitions, multiple ones clearly jockeying for a future run for Mayor or something else (whereas previously the City Commission had not been much of a "stepping stone" never mind the run of Lambert Mims for U.S. Senate in 1972 and the previous run of Trimmier for Congress in 1964) and this was a situation actually similar to what the municipal legislature had been in the 1890's in terms of the actions of individual aldermen in the city but Outlaw had always had the image of the gentleman patrician businessman and he honestly was concerned with state politics and I just don't think he was fully prepared for the Council he would have and I also think many of his difficulties were generational.

Mayor Outlaw was a man of the Greatest Generation presiding over what had become a majority Baby Boomer city within the electorate and the difference between someone born in 1920 and 1947 and raised in Mobile was obvious and to the Southern rock generation when you understand how men like Outlaw of his time and background were raised again I think he was at a generational disadvantage for the environment he faced from 1985-1989 but more importantly here is someone who was on the Mobile City Commission from 1965-1969 and remember at the time of the 1956 annexation within the pre-annexation borders of 25 square miles there were 125,000 residents and after annexation there were estimated to be about 170,000 in the city and the 1960 census turned in a population of 202,000 but it should be considered that the population in the city proper probably peaked prior to the closure of Brookley in the mid-1960's between 205,000-220,000 but Brookley's closure triggered massive job losses and when you look at the population decline from 1960 to 1970 it doesn't fully reflect the impact of Brookley's closure but when you grant a higher than 1960 population for the city circa 1963 then some of the figures and statistics make more sense.

But that matters because when you get west of Sage Avenue and in particular west of Beltline Highway a disproportionate amount of residential construction occurred after 1960 in the post-1956 territory and when you think of when Outlaw left office as Public Safety Commissioner the first time in 1969 soon after Hurricane Camille and then think of Hillcrest Road/Arnold Road in 1970 that was still essentially a rural road through the country side with development that today we might call exurban and generally less developed than Snow Road was in 2005 in West Mobile County and the subdivisions off Japonica Lane, Burma Road, etc in 1969 a number of areas were relatively new housing of people moving generally from Midtown and Downtown into the city and the area of Moffett Road west of

Beltline had actually been one of the earlier developed areas but in the 1970's it actually saw "flight within the city" of people who had lived in Toulminville as well as from Prichard as generally that corridor was the first destination of those who had been in Toulminville or Prichard circa 1955 when it came to 1975 and much of the Prichard flight went into the city of Mobile itself before going over to Baldwin County or the Highway 43 suburbs which in retrospect probably helped contribute to the racially charged city politics of the 1970's but it was generally younger people "moving out west" and not so much the contemporaries of Outlaw's generation (granted Sonny Callahan used to live in the big mansion at the end of Byronell Court off of Azalea Road) who were still more likely to be found east of Beltline (for example Connie Bea Hope maintained her home on Melrose Street with a grapefruit tree into the 1980's even as flight had turned it into a primarily majority African-American street near the Birdville projects) and while Outlaw certainly knew he had won votes in these areas in 1985 back in 1965 they had not had all that many votes and like many older people I think he was set in his ways a bit and I think in some respects in terms of the government the Zoghby Bill set up in 1985 and then the way development had progressed in the city even since 1969 but I think it helps to remember who Arthur Outlaw was as a politician in his core and the archetype he represented within Mobile public life and why he even came to power in 1965 and to do this you have to go to 1953 when the elections saw complete turnover in the Mobile City Commission with State Senator Joe Langan elected as Finance Commissioner, Henry R. Luscher as Public Safety Commissioner, and Charlie Hackmeyer as Public Works Commissioner.

Henry R. Luscher (1953-1961) had in his youth been the king of the Mobile Carnival Association (MCA) and had gone on to a career in business and remember Outlaw had served on an MCA Court in the 1940's and the elections of 1961 saw Langan returned to office with new members of the City Commission in McNally and Trimmier, neither of whom would return to office in 1965 and Outlaw based his campaign in 1965 in part on historic preservation and he has to be credited as one of the first significant Mobile figures to push historic preservation as an issue and it became one in earnest because of public sadness over the razing of historic areas like Spanish Alley, and in the Texas Street Redevelopment Area, and old Orange Grove that had once contained some of the oldest extent architecture in the city and it had always been "east of Sage" that had powered Outlaw as a politician even in 1965 but in terms of archetype, the businessman who had been on an MCA court with a patrician air, Outlaw came to the Mobile City Commission in 1965 in many ways as a "younger version of Henry Luscher" and also saw the rise of Lambert Mims who in 1965 was elected as "the candidate of the Parkway" with "the Parkway" itself being a relatively new concept.

In retrospect, the great irony of Joe Langan in Mobile city politics is that the annexations of 1956 are ultimately what paved the way for his defeat in 1969 and had Mobile remained within the pre-1956 annexation borders he probably could have served on the Mobile City Commission well into the 1980's because when you think for example what Moon Landrieu was in New Orleans city politics in the late 1960's on the New Orleans City Council and then as Mayor from 1970-1978 Langan in the 1950's you could certainly call "proto-Moon" and of course Moon is elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives in 1959 and is one of the few to vote against the hate bills (and this he had in common with Reubin Askew of Escambia County in the Florida Legislature) but Joe Langan did the same thing in the Alabama Senate in the 1940's when it was a far more courageous thing to do (Jim Crow existed in 1949 and 1959 but they were of course different worlds and this is not to minimize Moon's record as I admire him, but everyone understands my point) and in the case of Langan it has to be remembered he was the son-in-law of one Sheriff and the nephew-in-law of the longest serving Sheriff of Mobile County, both of those Sheriffs themselves being sons of a Sheriff who served in the 1880's-1890's.

But when Langan was defeated in 1969 his defeat was rooted in the areas annexed in 1956 and it was generally where his opposition drew strength in the 1965 elections as well but of course the appeal of Outlaw entering office on 1965 on a platform of historic preservation as the period from the establishment of Brookley Air Base in the 1930's-1960's basically saw large sections of the historic areas of the city where there were cases of some branch of the same family owning a house even prior to 1830 and then all of the sudden the old is torn down for the new and in the one sense Langan the modernizer tried to appeal in the new areas precisely as the modernizer but in the climate of the 1960's whereas the older areas of the city had always been mixed these new subdivisions would all start out 80-90% white and so anti-integrationist reaction to Langan was able to crystallize in these areas.

Outlaw as much as anything is elected as a "Mobile should return to its roots" candidate which can have many meanings as an entendre in the city because many in the city had never agreed with the suppression of fun (aka "vice") as part of the efforts to attract Brookley AFB, though knowing now that Lister Hill was the nephew of Albert Sidney Lyons, himself kin to Pat Lyons, that the efforts to win Hill the Senate seat held by newly appointed Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black (still a reviled figure in Mobile at that point) likely played a substantial role in the city's efforts to "curtail vice" after 1936 and far more than any "military" base because the marriage of Hill's Lyons mother to his father itself represented a marriage into one of the most elite and prestigious families in the Montgomery and indeed Alabama statewide aristocracy but the coalition of Hill's voters in that election had lot of overrun with the coalitions that had powered Bibb Graves to the governorship in 1926 and 1934 as well as backing the Little Colonel in his failed campaign for the same office in 1922.

So when you take that as the "explanation" then it can be assumed that "Mobile cleaning up" was more about getting blood kin of Albert S. Lyons into the U.S. Senate than anything else because while Hill lived in Montgomery he represented a Wiregrass based congressional district that at the time he served in Congress included all of Baldwin and Escambia Counties. But it is actually that "cleaning up" is one of the many things that has always been mourned in the city preferred by those who consider themselves of "Old Mobile" orientation and it helps to remember in this discussion what the fights of the 1920's were about because at that time Old Mobile meant the city as it always had been, a city of trade and finance and commerce and immigrants that was "loose on vice" while the proponents of "cleaning up vice" in the 1920's also advocated as an economic program reorienting the economy of Mobile to become an industrial center and advanced an argument also advanced by similar "reformers" in New Orleans at the time that the city had to "clean up its ways" in order to attract investment because remember at this point while some growth had occurred in shipbuilding during World War I generally Mobile had maxed out as a growth center in 1860 and this had been disrupted by the War of Secession and then when northern capital moved into the South to build the industrialized "New South" they deliberated bypassed all the old leading cities of the South prior to the war (even New Orleans) in order to focus development on cities in the Southern Uplands less tied to the old plantation aristocracy (or why Greenville-Spartanburg industrialized and Charleston never did within South Carolina) and I know people will say "Galveston" as an objection to that but let's think about Galveston for a second.

Galveston County, Texas was carried by William McKinley for president in 1896 and did not have a large African-American population in the electorate at the time. Galveston saw its greatest growth period after the war and was developed in large part to be the main port of Texas but in Galveston you had very few ties to the "old plantation aristocracy" you would have seen in New Orleans, Mobile, Charleston, or Savannah and Galveston was largely a city of immigrants and had far

more emigres from the North than other Southern cities and had the 1900 hurricane not wiped out the city and oil had been discovered when it was Galveston would be what Houston is today just right on the Gulf itself, but after the storm the interests that had been driving the growth of Galveston redirected that energy towards Houston and by the 1920's the Gulf Coast city Galveston most resembled in terms of economic model and how it did business was Biloxi.

But back to Mobile of course in the 1920's "Old Mobile" vs "New Mobile" to the extent that the terms were used were as much about the culture war that raged in the city as much as anything. Once you get to 1937 you have to remember Prohibition was no longer the law of the land and even former Prohibitionist Graves himself had been willing to accept local option on going wet or dry in Alabama and with that facet of the culture war removed then it focused on gambling and prostitution and so both were suppressed and prostitution went underground while gambling ceased to be a factor before Outlaw was first elected in 1965. But many in Mobile longed for that era and it is why when Bart Chamberlain left the country in the 1970's he was seen by many in the city, especially those often attending MCA functions, as a hero and he of course did what Police Chief P.J. O'Shaughnessey himself had done a half century before.

In 1937, New Orleans Mayor Robert Maestri (1936-1946) adopted a policy that "the seedy history of New Orleans can be a tourism and economic benefit" and this was occurring at the same time as the Senate election and vice-suppression in Alabama and so I think in retrospect again you understand the Senate race in 1937 is why the "fun" was suppressed in Mobile but you note that Biloxi suppressed nothing and they still have Keesler AFB and so generally in terms of the 1920's, once alcohol was left out of it the reformers did get their wish of "cleaning up Mobile" but the political clique they had opposed in the 1920's kept firm reign on power in the city and in Mobile County itself.

A Romagnano Administration would necessarily reject the "Lyons Settlement of 1937" because I believe to attract capital and investment in the 21st century global economy, as Mayor Maestri said of his city 85 years ago, it is that history as a party town that attracts economic investment and lends authenticity to New Orleans and I believe the same can be true for Mobile and it is time to reverse the impacts of the Lyons Settlement of 1937 in Mobile and bring back the atmosphere and libertine "Free State of Mobile" atmosphere of the city in the 1920's that people put everything on the line a century ago in order to defend.

But back to Arthur Outlaw this is relevant to him because of course Outlaw was always thoroughly identified with "Old Mobile" in city politics, a Catholic patrician who had been educated at McGill and Spring Hill College and whose political appeal was primarily built on historic preservation and again I think it is who Outlaw was and how he came up in politics that set him up for the loss in 1989.

Outlaw never understood what Mims intrinsically understood because remember Joe Langan himself was a representation of "Old Mobile" just for being the son-in-law of Robert Holcombe and the nephew-in-law of Willie Holcombe and when Outlaw first came to power in 1965 there was a lot of overrun between his natural political base and the political base of Langan but Outlaw was completely a product of Mobile before World War II while Mims had come to the city afterwards and while there have been "Mims" family members prominent in the hinterlands surrounding Mobile County even before statehood Mims in many ways was representative of the people who came to Mobile during World War II and stayed and it was noted in 1960 by the Diocese of Mobile that the majority of

Mobile County's Catholic population lived in the pre-1956 borders and by 2000 the majority lived between Cody and the Beltline but generally the first occupants of those subdivisions west of Sage in say 1952 were more likely to have been of the folks who had moved to the city during World War II and these were the early settlers of these neighborhoods and then in the convulsions of the 1960's the more "Old Mobile" populations in the city who in say 1960 would have lived on a Midtown block where a majority of the families were Catholic and generally supportive of Langan by 1975 were vastly populating the new subdivisions that reached their apex of construction during the 1970's proportionally and so people who in 1943 wanted nothing to do with the "newcomers to town" (native Mobilians in fact blamed "the outsiders" for the race riots of 1943) ended up being their neighbors but of course it was generally the children of those of the age of Arthur Outlaw and Joe Langan who opted to buy in the new neighborhoods rather than the older neighborhoods in the historic core.

Lambert Mims was basically the tribune of post-1956 Mobile and was the big daddy of Dauphin Island Parkway but the one continuity between Lambert Mims and Joe Langan is that both were the apostles of growth but Arthur Outlaw came to power in 1965 when people still shopped downtown but in the 1970's retailers all abandoned downtown and college kids going to bars were more likely to go to those closer to the University of South Alabama or even in strips that were popular in Prichard then before going into the territory now enclosed by the Hank Aaron Loop and the idea of "LoDa" as we have it now would be been thought of as unthinkable or unfeasible in 1975 but Mims became the apostle of annexation and of growth though in his time growth centered more on trying to build the industry of the chemical plants to provide an economic base for the city but I think Mims even intended to push for metropolitan consolidated city-county government as Langan once backed (and ostensibly lost the 1969 election over) because in 1980 he won the Democratic nomination for Mobile County Commission District 3 for his brother Jeff and usually that would have been the election but the Republican nominee Archer pulled off an upset in the November elections but during that time there were modernizers who would have gladly knocked down all of "Downtown Mobile" within the Hank Aaron Loop just as there were similar ones who wanted to "knock down the French Quarter" in New Orleans and there were those who wanted to do the same with historic neighborhoods in San Francisco when the city seemingly underwent a period of urban decay in the 1970's but the historic preservationist movement of which Outlaw was a key mover and shaker served to inhibit such demolition attempts.

But the reality is in the Mobile of 1973-1989 to be rather blunt you could have probably sold the voting electorate of the territory of the city of Mobile on the idea of "knocking down everything downtown" to try and redevelop it as a new and shiny business district like other cities were getting at the time and you probably could have even sold it in Midtown by saying it would "help shore up their neighborhoods" and focusing on the "seediness" of downtown and how it had become "run down" as remember the old Battle House Hotel that had once hosted the sitting President of the United States as a guest closed down in the 1970's and sat as a vacant building for over 30 years because I remember walking past the ruin and being told what it was in the 1990's and it took Dr. David Bronner and Retirement Systems of Alabama to bring back the Battle House to its full glory but had he not the building would have sat there because you couldn't tear it down and it wasn't suitable by modern standards for office space and because of what it was community sentiment would have opposed even a rehabilitation of the building into uses that would have done well at the time like high end condos in the old Battle House Hotel structure.

It was during the Outlaw Administration that you began seeing the final stages of build-out in subdivisions in the Hillcrest Road corridor like the Autumn Ridge and Heritage Woods subdivisions of my childhood (as my childhood home on Lighthouse Court was finished in 1987 during the Outlaw Administration and the previous home on Stone Mill Run was an early 1980's construction and my father chose the lot because it was the smallest in the neighborhood and in a sidewalk in the backyard there are markings in the cement my half sister Lisa made during construction, she is now the daughter-in-law of retired insurance agent Jim Eubanks) but the world Outlaw came from and operated in his whole life was simply a different world ironically from the world where Republicans generally drew their votes in Mobile County elections at the time (in 1989 they primarily came from in the city limits between Cody and Beltline and then out in Semmes, while the rural north and south counties still voted Democratic in the state and local level as demonstrated well in the precinct level returns in the 1990 elections) and the thing about Outlaw is that his return to politics as an active candidate in the mid-1980's was as the gentleman "elder" statesman and that is really who he was in 1985 but this was just as the Baby Boomer generation across America was "finding its oats" politically and for example you take Governor Bill Clinton (1979-1981, 1983-1992) in Arkansas, Clinton actually won his first election for Governor in 1978 after a term as Attorney General and while his start in politics had been helped by the losing race for Congress in 1974 Clinton was acceptable to the solons in Little Rock from the get-go in a way that many other 31 year old Ivy League graduates who had not had much professional experience would not have been (much less with a Yankee wife who did not take his name at first) because of his Uncle Raymond who had been a mover and shaker in Little Rock during his time in the Legislature representing Hot Springs and so Bill Clinton was elected in 1978 as the populist candidate of the young and then loses re-election in November in 1980 because of the Fort Baxter situation and car tags, but Clinton even in 1981 out of office is still seen as someone "you can do business with" and is still "the nephew of a one time powerful legislator" and he still had chiefly his base of Baby Boomers and dissatisfaction had grown with Governor Frank White (1981-1983) because many voted for him in 1980 expecting Winthrop Rockefeller (1967-1971) redux and ended up with something different and it was a lot of the Little Rock business community and the old solons in the state who saw Clinton with his Baby Boomer base and so in 1982 it is still Clinton the Baby Boomer and the rock n'roll candidate with long hair but it is somewhat similar to the impetus behind the campaign of Governor Roy Cooper (2017-present) in North Carolina and the Little Rock business community thought Clinton would be better for economic recruitment than another term of White and Arkansas was still thoroughly one party and so they threw in behind the "new Bill Clinton" and so he won 1982, and of course they were fully aware that 1982 was likely to be Democratic nationally and so they got Clinton back early.

In 1989, the clear Baby Boomer "stalking horse" in Mobile politics as much as anyone was John Peavy because Peavy was always for the most broad annexation proposals even back to his first term on the Council during the Outlaw Administration and it was Peavy who once advocated the dissolution of the city of Prichard and annexation thereof by Mobile and if Peavy took up the Romagnanoist platform he is a candidate you could get behind but I wonder if the wounds of 2005 and then the fact that he tended to dominate road construction contracts during the Jones Administration and then did well under the Stimpson Administration and was appointed over Public Works, I mean he is a Government Plaza insider but much of the old base of his City Council district has moved out of the city but of course I do think even after 40 years he is interested but of course he is a completely different man today then in 1981 running against Greenough though I will say given the political moves over the years of the current incumbent in Mobile County Commission District 2 if the incumbent proved problematic for a Romagnano Administration (or otherwise Romagnanoist

Administration) without hesitation I would back a campaign by Peavy in District 2 though at this point time my preference would be to move Peavy to Finance Director to replace Paul Wesch and then to appoint former City Councilman Charlie Waller (1993-2001) to replace Peavy at Public Works with the stipulation that "the Romagnano Administration" sides with the garbage workers.

However in the event Peavy was made Finance Director, being Finance Director of the City of Mobile does not preclude someone from service in the Alabama Legislature and while I think Chris Pringle is reliable for the city (and he was my preferred candidate in Senate District 34 in 2006) I have real questions about the current occupant of the Senate District 34 seat because my position is a seat with 80% of residents in the city and comprising Spring Hill, the northern portions of Cottage Hill, the University of South Alabama, should be represented by someone who lives in the city and clearly in tune with city leadership and I do not see the current incumbent in 34 as someone who will be around a long time to build seniority and so in a Romagnano Administration the District 34 race will be polled to see if Finance Director Peavy is capable of winning the Republican primary in District 34 and if he is I would strongly ask him to run and should he win he would remain the Finance Director while also serving in the Alabama Senate and would be in the Alabama Senate specifically to be "a vote for the administration."

Having said this is the current incumbent in Senate District 34 will understand the realities of the district they represent and accept proper guidance from the city in the appropriate matters I see no reason why they cannot continue in their seat after 2022 but I have brought this up only because of the immense respect I have always had for John Peavy.

But back to Arthur Outlaw and the genesis of his loss in 1989 and as much as anything placing second in the first round probably helped nail the coffin because it showed "the giant was wounded" but Outlaw had spent over a decade as the behind the scenes man and organizer rather than being in the paper everyday and again I think he never really understood the pulse of voters born after 1950 and he never really got the city west of the Beltline and Outlaw I think had a specific vision for the historic core and I think he wanted to bring back the historic core but I think the 1956 annexations and the fact that all population transfers had occurred within the city obscured Mayor Outlaw to the fact that the voters west of Beltline at that time had far more of a "suburban consciousness", though again the development of "West Mobile" as the term was used circa 1960 is akin to the use of the term "New Orleans East" under the administrations of Victor Schiro (1961-1970) and Moon Landrieu (1970-1978) in New Orleans, and even for someone who had been on trips across the world I think the "Mobile exceptionalism" that Outlaw held to and that many of Old Mobile orientation always held to, again everyone takes the position that "he never saw it coming" and so I am trying to explain my view of why I think this is analyzing his term critically.

Mike Dow of course had originally intended to run in City Council District 6 (which would have meant a challenge to Jane Baxter) because at the time he lived in one of the giant mansions on Canebrake Road off of Hillcrest (and one neighborhood I want to see left completely intact is Canebrake and this is true of most of the larger "mansion" neighborhoods like Delwood and the Indian Creek neighborhood by Mobile Infirmary as well as Lansdowne proper off of Government and of course Tokeneak Trail as well and Foxfire off of Moffett) but the polling he took indicated that Outlaw was vulnerable to a challenge and he had plenty of money and was brother-in-law to the richest man in town and was himself a combat veteran and so he took the plunge and remember Dow's campaign centered mainly on opposition to the convention center but the subtext of that in the world of 1989 is

“Arthur Outlaw is wasting money on downtown” and that was because the image and repertoire of Arthur Outlaw his entire time in public life was of the historic preservationist and while many mourned the tearing down of Spanish Alley and the Texas Street Redevelopment Area remember in the 1950’s these areas were seen as slums and in the 1950’s Spanish Alley was often where “teenagers hung out” as relayed to me by Lee and Bertha Guesnard Phillips and so these areas were seen as “slums not worth saving” even in 1965 and then after business fled downtown in the 1970’s you had a bunch of historic buildings that preservationists would not let you tear down in what was a decade of economic malaise following the Brookley closing and you had had the tallest skyscraper in the city built in the 1960’s and at the same time cities like New Orleans (which Mobile has always looked to for inspiration) were building skylines as was Birmingham but the “historic preservationists” wouldn’t let you tear down the sites people thought to be attractive for such things and so the idea that Outlaw was attacked on in 1989 more than anything else was “wasting money on downtown” because Outlaw was one of the reasons why the Battle House sat abandoned rather than being “torn down” when many thought it would simply sit abandoned and so the convention center he proposed that now bears his name was seen as a boondoggle and that generally powered Mike Dow to victory in a generational election but what was also a regional election where he was powered into office by voters west of the Beltline in which was a case of the city west of Beltline prevailing over the city east of the Beltline and the prevailing of post-1956 Mobile over pre-1956 Mobile.

That no one seriously considered challenging Outlaw until Dow and the idea of his support being “a mile wide and inch deep” was precisely because of his image as the elder statesman and control of the state Republican Party (meaning his impact on patronage within the state during the Bush presidency) but also because I think many on the Mobile City Council and others who might have made the race thinking he would not run for re-election in 1993 and so preferred another term of him simply so everyone could jockey for the Mayor’s race in 1993 and I think there is no question if Outlaw had won re-election in 1989 that John Peavy would have run for Mayor in 1993.

But of course it was because Outlaw had the ability to dry up funding for any potential opposition candidate but Dow being wealthy and his brother-in-law being who he was didn’t have such problems and so could put enough of his own money in it to convince others to do the same and when you look back to the mayoral election of 2013 where incumbent Sam Jones raised over $300,000 remember this was a very good haul for an incumbent Mayor, but that Dow had always had larger hauls in later terms and Stimpson came in with close to a million in his fundraising coffers because Stimpson had been willing to stake his own money into it for one thing.

I earlier in this book defended the Prichard Mall brought to fruition by Prichard Mayor A.J. Cooper (1972-1980) that people often use to attack him for the decline of Prichard when anyone who knows how cities generally function in America and have in the last 50 years and the general inner dynamics of Mobile County understands that the decline of Prichard would have happened with or without the Prichard Mall and I actually think the biggest catalyst was the racially tinged politics of the 1970’s in Mobile and the fight over the City Commission form of government being challenged by Fred Richardson and Noble Beasley over race because Cooper tried to steer a moderate course on race much as State Representative John LeFlore (1975-1976) had done throughout his career but I think the turmoil in Mobile helped to exacerbate racially motivated residential flight from Prichard which in the 1970’s actually saw the lion’s share of Prichard residents moving to Mobile (especially the northwestern portions of Overlook, Moffett, and Orchard) before any suburbs or unincorporated areas and I think if you analyzed the “Prichard Flight” voters in Mobile in 1989 it was probably one of the

strongest segments of opposition to Arthur Outlaw and votes for Mike Dow in 1989 but remember Prichard had been incorporated since 1925 and had become “Alabama’s largest suburb” in the context of the 1950’s and Prichard had originally been formed to be a second city in Mobile County as the original development of Prichard consisted of a streetcar suburb around Wilson Avenue at a time when Mobile did carry out some annexations in the 1920’s with the last major one prior to 1956 in that decade being in 1926 I believe and Prichard was incorporated mainly to keep that business district around Wilson Avenue and then homes off of Turner Road and so forth from being annexed into Mobile. But in the Prichard migrants you had a group of people who had actually left the city of Mobile even back in the 1940’s who moved back into the city after 1970 because of “racial transition in Prichard” and these people were just not wedded to any urban core and certainly if you consider what the “Prichard Flight” vote was in Mobile in 1989 if you could isolate that vote out in the returns I think it is quite possible without it that Mayor Outlaw narrowly wins re-election over Mike Dow but I again focus on “the Prichard Mall” because every attack made on A.J. Cooper over the issue of the Prichard Mall was regurgitated at least in style to attack Outlaw over the proposed Mobile Convention Center.

The tendency of Mobile throughout its history has always been to compare itself first and foremost to the Southern cities that were great ports prior to the War of Secession and Mobile always has compared itself to New Orleans simply because of the history of the city back to French Louisiana times but in 1860 Mobile in size was between Charleston and Savannah and in the case of Charleston and Savannah both are like Mobile in that their heyday in importance and international esteem was during antebellum times and all were once the primary cities of their states but which the “New South” development post-1875 bypassed in favor of new cities in the uplands (Atlanta was once “Terminus” just as Birmingham was once “Elyton”) and all three had the experience of being criticized by upstate politicians (though the least severe was Savannah and Chatham County often was carried by Gene Talmadge as generally they gave their votes to whoever would give Chatham County and Savannah city a free hand locally) and all regarded themselves as repositories of the values of the Old South and Savannah like Mobile at one time had a very large Catholic population though in Savannah it was almost entirely of Irish extraction and Charleston remained majority Protestant whereas at times Savannah had a Catholic majority like Mobile but Charleston had a very strong Catholic minority and Supreme Court Justice and U.S. Secretary of State James F. Byrnes was born Catholic but converted to prosper in politics (similar to Lister Hill who had been raised Catholic as a child and even identified as such in college but converted prior to entering politics in Montgomery) but of course of the three Charleston was actually the last city to “suppress vice” as it were and it generally was not curtailed in Charleston until the 1950’s and more than 15 years after such efforts began in Mobile and of course Charleston and Savannah compare each other and are in each other’s shadow and Savannah always said of itself that it was far less “snobbish” than Charleston which always like most Southern ports had a libertine air but was always very aristocratic and stuffy in values even in 1835 as much a South Carolina version of Boston as anything else and while 2/3’s of the nations millionaires lived in Louisiana in Mississippi the largest plantations by acreage in all of America were generally in the low country around Charleston which is why those counties were still called “the feudal counties” by political scientist V.O. Key in 1949.

I focus on Charleston because anyone on a Mobile Carnival Association court in the 1940’s as Mayor Outlaw was would have been raised with a certain conception of what Mobile is, was, and should be, and the proper place thereof in the world especially when Outlaw was also a Catholic and product of McGill Institute and Spring Hill College and so of course Mobilians of his time, place, and breeding the comparisons were always that New Orleans was the big city but that the more apt

comparisons were Charleston and Savannah and I think you have to understand that to understand the Outlaw Administration and how he governed and why the Mobile Convention Center was proposed as it was.

As I have noted before the entire repertoire of Arthur Outlaw his entire time in public life in Mobile revolved around historic preservation and Outlaw and others of his mindset became active on it in Mobile the same time you saw such movements arise in New Orleans, Charleston, and Savannah. (and of course Richmond too but Mobile never has compared itself to nor desired to emulate Richmond). Historic preservationists were more successful initially in Charleston and Savannah and if you drive around New Orleans in the historic areas and see a 1950's mansion by Broadway in what is otherwise an 1890's neighborhood actually overall more historic homes have been torn down for new construction in New Orleans proportionally than Mobile, Charleston, or Savannah but New Orleans is simply so large and so vast and has such a supply that it doesn't seem that way but anyone who has driven around the city and seen the architecture understands this because historic preservation came later to New Orleans as a movement even than Mobile as at one point there were proposals to completely raze the French Quarter so it could be redeveloped (like the CBD area which is built on the former Faubourg St. Marie) and remember that the administration of Mayor Chep Morrison (1946-1961) was very much like that of Joe Langan in that you saw a lot that was historic come down, and wider roads built, and that really historic preservationists in New Orleans did not have someone truly in the tank on the issue until the administration of Moon Landrieu (1970-1978) though it has to be said that Vic Schiro (1961-1970) would have never permitted anyone to raze the French Quarter and did as much as anyone to help protect it.

I don't think the model Outlaw sought to emulate was New Orleans, I think it was Charleston, and so to understand what I think the vision of Mayor Outlaw may have been it is against necessary to look at Charleston and the 40 year administration of Mayor Joseph P. Riley (1975-2016).

It is said that Spanish Alley had a larger collection of buildings extent to the 1700's colonial period than the French Quarter in New Orleans. Orange Grove had been one of the earliest residential areas of the city to develop with many buildings extent to the 1830's and the same was true of the territory of the Texas Street Redevelopment area which was a "slum clearance" typical of its time but there are a few structures that made it out and there is one house nestled among all the 1950's-60's style ranch homes that very obviously looks like it was constructed in the 1830's or 1840's and a decent size house at that and I am sure there is a story behind its preservation. But in the case of Charleston actually very little was ever destroyed and West Ashley was opened up for development in the 1950's precisely because you could not dare build new structures on the peninsula even then but the Charleston that Joe Riley inherited upon taking office in 1975 is not dissimilar from what Mobile would have looked like had the areas razed under Langan not been razed and had the 1956 annexation not occurred.

Charleston considers itself a Southern city but it was also one of the "great port cities" of the colonies and so there actually is some comparison to a "Boston" within Charleston on those grounds and there actually is a "French Quarter" in Charleston so designated as this was the area of the highest Huguenot concentration of settlement in the United States but it has buildings dating to the early 1700's and the original cobblestone streets and it was part of the original layout of Charlestowne in 1680 and it has to be remembered that Savannah became a larger city before Mobile did but was founded after Mobile while Charleston predates Mobile and I bring this up because when I was a child in the 1990's

there were horse drawn carriage rides as an attraction in Downtown Mobile and they basically took patrons around to see historic architecture and were meant to be the same as such similar rides in cities like New Orleans, Charleston, and Savannah.

I think the model Outlaw always had first and foremost in mind was Charleston because remember after "vice" became being formally suppressed in Mobile 1937 you began to see a more stuffy nature establish itself among many of the kinds of folks that made up MCA courts as Outlaw was on in his younger days and remember I said as an archetype in 1965 that Outlaw was in some ways a younger version of the archetype that former MCA King Henry Luscher had represented on the Mobile City Commission from 1953-1961.

The Mobile of Outlaw's youth was one with a military school that educated many of the future leaders of the city and this Mobile had in common with Savannah but of course the military school in Savannah, Benedictine, is actually run by the Roman Catholic Church and has generally been where the lace curtain Irish Catholics of the city send their sons and Benedictine is actually woven into the fabric of the culture in Savannah and I won't discuss all of that here and then of course Charleston itself has the Military College of South Carolina (aka The Citadel) which Benjamin Ryan Tillman (Governor 1890-1894, US Senator 1895-191) ridiculed as "a military dude factory that could profitably be repurposed as a school for women" in his rise to power but with the idea of Mobile "curtailing vice" to the point that my grandmother Lorraine (the daughter of Connie Bea Hope and as sure a repository of Old Mobile values as there ever has been, speaking with the classic non-rhotic r dropping accent till she died) once referred to New Orleans as "dirty" as it were (when of course pretty much all the critics of Mobile said the same thing of it circa 1925) but I think the city he wanted to set Mobile into competition with in the national mindset was Charleston and certainly that would mean being lumped with Savannah too (and I always called Mobile a cross between New Orleans and Savannah when it explaining to people from Chicago, St. Louis, etc in college) but when you remember how Outlaw first came into public life certainly in 1985 he knew who Joe Riley was and how he had governed for 10 years in Charleston and I think Riley was an influence on Outlaw because the Mobile Convention Center as proposed was right out of the Joe Riley playbook of governance and the way it was packaged, site location, etc, suggests a clear Joe Riley influence.

When Joe Riley took office as Mayor of Charleston in 1975 it was seen as a city beginning to decay, wracked with flight to the suburbs, it had never regained the economic prominence it had had in 1860, it had a brain drain, but the one thing it had was its history and its architecture and the sense its people had of it as "the Holy City" and that "Charleston was the world" and that "the world outside of Charleston does not matter" but Riley in a very real sense was the perfect person to be Mayor of Charleston at the time for what the city needed because he was young enough not have the old South Carolina attitudes on race but was still a product of The Citadel and as such who would have been expected to naturally rise into leadership in Charleston historically but when you think of what Charleston was in 1975 there were actually "modernizers" there who would have been happy tearing down "derelict blocks" to try and build more modern office plazas but in Charleston the persons who this of course would have been most offensive too were the traditional elites of the city who generation after generation had come out of The Citadel and the thing to remember about Charleston within Charleston is that Charleston is very much its own universe but when you think of how old line Virginians regard Virginia and send generation after generation to VMI and so forth you get an idea of what Charleston is among the old line.

And to that extent Arthur Outlaw in 1965 occupied a somewhat similar position within the patois of Mobile politics that Joe Riley occupied in Charleston upon the assumption of power in late 1975 and I am saying this because I was born in 1985 so I was born in the last months of the City Commission rule over Mobile and Outlaw's Administration comprised my very early childhood but of course Christmas Day 1989 which I can remember very vividly which occurred when I was 4 years old occurred after Mike Dow had been sworn in as the 106th Mayor of Mobile and so I have to take an almost historian's look at that era but synthesizing what I remember and what I know (and my grandmother Lorraine never liked Dow for beating Outlaw, but she never thought highly of Bess Rich either) I do think what Outlaw was going for was the pattern of development in Charleston that existed under Riley and certainly in the historic core and remember when he took office in 1985 you had not really had any semblance of the urban decay now ringing inner ring suburbs across America in Mobile and in fact the territory between Cody and Beltline was reaching its historic zenith as at that time you had not even really seen flight out of the city in the Moffett Road corridor or the Wolf Ridge Road subdivisions or Dauphin Island Parkway peninsula (though admittedly one of the first newer areas of the city to experience such flight was in the areas of Dauphin Island Parkway between I-10 and the Five Points intersection of Gosson Street, Duval Street, and Halls Mill Road) and the flight from the pre-1956 territory had simply been within the city limits into the new areas built in the territory annexed after 1956 and this is actually similar to how population distributed in New York City after the consolidation in 1898 as in particular you had all the immigrant neighborhoods of Manhattan but then after consolidation everyone moved out to The Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens, and many Americans don't understand that at one time The Bronx as a borough was literally 50% Jewish and once upon a time was the center of Jewish culture in life in the United States and a larger "Jewish city" than Tel Aviv is today in a sense.

But again back to the early tenure of Charleston Mayor Joe Riley in 1977 the Riley Administration backed a move to essentially do the same thing on a vacant lot in Charleston what Mayor Outlaw proposed 10 years later with the Mobile Convention Center and in this case it was also going to have a hotel built but remember that the Outlaw Convention Center is where the Riverview Plaza Hotel is now and that was a brand spanking new Adam's Mark Hotel that opened in the early 1980's and was without question the finest and up to date hotel facility in the city and when you consider what Charleston Place was when it opened in 1986, with the idea of conference rooms and other venues and then the hotel, that is what you should always compare the Mobile Convention Center with in its location next to the Riverview Plaza Hotel and I believe it actually has more venue space than the area that was such a key project for the Riley Administration in Charleston and so I personally think this development first opening as it did influenced the decision of Mayor Outlaw to push for the Convention Center that ultimately cost him the 1989 election because you look at what Charleston Place was when it opened in 1986 and the compare it to the compendium of the Outlaw Convention Center and the Riverview Plaza Hotel and you can see the similarities.

It was also during the time that Mayor Outlaw took office (in Riley's third term as Mayor of Charleston) that the city of Charleston really began promoting projects to enhance the waterfront with actually greater similarities to for example Palafox Pier in Pensacola and then the Maritime Center on Pensacola Bay that bears the name of the man who envisioned it, longtime Mayor Vince Whibbs Sr. I say this because again the Outlaw Convention Center was on the waterfront right there on Water Street and you have to remember what Water Street was in 1987 and you also have to remember what the block of streets around it were and for example one block west on Royal Street because you had a high vacancy rate and a lot of empty storefronts and when you think of downtown even being a premiere bar

district it was not that in 1987 so when you look at Outlaw through the prism of the example in particular of Mayor Riley and what he was doing in Charleston at the time you understand what he was trying to do.

And just as I have defended AJ Cooper on the Prichard Mall in an earlier section of this book because it was a good idea and the decline of Prichard would have happened with or without it and was driven by forces greater than Cooper and people simply use Prichard Mall to attack Cooper, but again as I have defended Cooper I defend Arthur Outlaw on the Mobile Convention Center because long term it was the right thing to do and it was meant to, when pared with the Adam's Mark Hotel, to try and stir investment into an area where pretty much almost the few still holding on when Hurricane Frederic came through in 1979 left.

But this is why Outlaw lost in 1989 because he did not understand what Mims knew even in 1977 and that was that basically at that point retail in Mobile was centered in the malls and then along the corridors of Airport Boulevard, Government Boulevard, Cottage Hill Road, and so forth and simply put if you didn't work downtown you only went there for Mardi Gras parades and a few other events and I can remember as a child going to the old federal courthouse and they had that elevator lined with a weird kind of fabric that was decades old and it was so slow and creaky and as a child it always scared the hell out of me (because at that time the US Attorney's Office was there, they moved it to 169 Dauphin Street later in the tenure of Jeff Sessions) but you had a Battle House that was 15 years abandoned and that wasn't the only one and it is either the International Trade Center (aka the AmSouth Building, aka the 430 foot tall tower downtown built in the 60s) or the RSA Tower that was ultimately built on land that the old Custom's House was built on which for a long time was a true Mobile landmark but fell into oblivion before historic preservation could save it.

I think Outlaw had Charleston as his model and at that time the suburbs in West Ashley were thriving as well as North Charleston outside the city limits but Riley was bringing back the historic core of Charleston and had had some notable successes even by 1987 and I think that was his model but of course Mike Dow ran a two pronged campaign and part of it was generational and part of it was an attack on the convention center and that's because generally west of Beltline it was seen as a boondoggle because people didn't see the value of it because they thought downtown was done because in most American cities at this time downtowns were done and no one believed in them and the great urban revival had not occurred yet.

But what's also true is that in that territory between Cody and Beltline you had a lot of people who had no roots in the city before 1942 and who when they first came couldn't get housing anywhere in the established neighborhoods and so were first in the developments that were slapped together in 1942-45 taking whatever they could get and those that did stay were the early purchasers of a lot of the houses you see of a certain style along the neighborhoods on Emogene Street etc in the late 1940s, basically for so many of the post-1941 settlers into the city from the countryside, they may have shopped downtown circa 1960 but they never actually had much experience east of Sage and they can remember when they came to Mobile in the early 40's that the natives didn't exactly look kindly on them and so honestly they had no love for the historic core, and that was the force that powered the Dow victory in 1989.

I of course would have done the same thing with the Convention Center that Mayor Outlaw did and of course Mayor Dow did the same thing and so a lot of the voters that had backed him in 1989

never forgave him over that issue and they were the voters that Bess Rich rallied in the 1990's as the "loyal opposition" claiming that "too much focus is wasted on downtown" but it was about what the Dow Campaign had said in 1989 but of course Dow was a tech industry executive and Dow actually went to far more cities than most Mobile businessmen and so he knew what cities were coming back and how and why and I will discuss Dow in his own section but honestly had Outlaw proposed such a thing in say 1968 it would have gone over completely differently but it was what it was.

Outlaw was completely rooted in pre-World War II Mobile and that's what got him.

But of course if you ran the election of 1989 with the demographics as they are and precincts as they are, more votes are in Outlaw's column almost to the point of winning and that's because much of that "anti-downtown backlash" vote has simply moved west of Cody, or up Highway 43, or over to Baldwin County and aren't coming back because they never were tied to the historic core in the first place and were always in the more suburban street hierarchy areas and it is basically they who voted for Barlow for Sheriff in 2006, Bentley in 2010, Rusty Glover for District 34 Senate in 2006, Austin Rainwater for District 2 County Commission in 2004, these are the voters who if in 2008 didn't go McCain went Huckabee and who in 2012 were a strong base of Gingrich support in the primary.

All in all, Outlaw was perhaps the only one who had any faith in downtown at the time and by doubling down probably lost his chance to be Governor one day. The city forever owes him a debt and so I believe it is time to name a major thoroughfare for Outlaw.

THE END